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[C. Bindley]

THE

SPORTSMAN'S FRIEND

IN

A FROST.

BY HARRY HIEOVER,

AUTHOR OF

"STABLE TALK AND TABLE TALK;" "SPORTING FACTS AND SPORTING FANCIES;" "PROPER CONDITION OF HORSES;" "HINTS TO HORSEMEN," ETC. ETC.

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PREFACE.

If I considered an apology were required for bringing out the present book, my respect for my readers and the public would have been too great to have permitted my doing so.

In soliciting their usual kind forbearance and patronage in its favour, I am actuated by two impressions; the one is, that those who may have flattered me by reading my several writings in the "Sporting Magazine," may perchance feel a wish to have them by themselves in a volume. Those who have not, may perhaps find them "A Friend in a Frost," to beguile an hour when the sportsman is prohibited the far greater gratification of pursuing his favourite pursuits.

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Now Ready, in Two Volumes,

MYTHS

TRACED TO

THEIR PRIMARY SOURCE

THROUGH LANGUAGE.

BY MORGAN KAVANAGH.

The Author of this work, after accounting for the origin of speech and the formation of letters and words, shows how the leading events in the lives of Mythological characters must have been first suggested by other meanings than their names are now allowed to possess. Thus, to illustrate by a single example his mode of tracing Myths to their primary source, the root of the name Mercury must, according to the several forms it is equal to, and under which it may have often appeared, have anciently signified not only merchandize, as it does still, but also, god, thief, word, travel, flight, guide, death, wand, serpent, &c.; hence, the Author contends, from the name Mercury being perceived to have such meanings as these, the character so called was revered as the god of merchants, thieves, orators, &c., invested with wings, believed to be the guide of the dead, and was represented with a wand, and a serpent, &c. That is to say, the different meanings his name, under its several forms, was once perceived to have, must have first suggested the whole of the history, with, perhaps, a few embellishments, we now have of the god Mercury.

And if it be in this way, as the Author contends, and as the numerous startling results obtained through the application of his principles seem to show, that all, or very nearly all, of whatever is fabulous in the history and worship of the ancients is to be accounted for, it follows, since truth, however slow its progress, ultimately prevails over error, that this work must, while serving the cause of science and religion, prove fatal, sooner or later, to doctrines still extant; but in which no one not under the influence of old opinions, could for a moment believe, were their real origin once made known.

THE

SPORTSMAN'S FRIEND

IN

A FROST.

THE FIELD AND THE TURF.

Whatever pursuit men may adopt, be it one of recreation or business, it is quite natural they should depict and eulogise such predilection as one possessing advantages of some sort or other that place it on high ground when brought into comparison with the pursuits of other persons. No man likes to acknowledge himself either a simpleton or one of evil propensities; and in patronising any pursuit, unless he can—or, to say the least, fancies he can—show good grounds for doing that which he does, he virtually allows himself to be either a weak or badly-disposed member of society. It is true his reasons and arguments may not always be valid ones; still they are valid to this extent—it shows he has not the intention to play the part of the imbecile or rogue; his principle is therefore good, and few men are such bad judges of right and wrong but that if they always took principle

instead of inclination for their guide, they would, in most cases, act far better than they do; and when the recording spirit summed up the account of their earthly sins, we may venture a hope that the balance against the offending ones would at least place them within the pale of forgiveness.

There are, we will rejoice in saying, few pleasurable pursuits in this country that admit of unmitigated censure; though censurable some unquestionably are. But the two which form the subject of this article I trust are not. For if they were, the category of my sins would be a startling one; for I have mixed in them *con amore*. They have "grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength;" and, sooth to say, the animus as regards them remains in full vigour, though the strength is, like the sun (just bursting on my paper), fast verging to the far west.

There is, most unquestionably, a very wide difference between the man devoted to the turf and the one devoted to the field; and when this devotion is exclusive, I believe we must, in candour, allow there is collectively (and, of course, not individually speaking) by far a greater portion of liberal, honourable, and hospitable feeling to be found among hunting than racing men; reason must see it cannot be otherwise. The man who hunts, but does not keep hounds, can have but the pleasure of the chase as his inducement. I am now speaking of gentlemen, or others who hunt with the same views. The huntsman and whips are paid: but if they are, they are paid for following a harmless, manly, honest, and consequently (in its way) honourable employ. The dealer may hunt to show his horses; if he does, his act is at least a perfectly justifiable one. He does not ask you to buy, on what he *says* of his horse, but what he

shows his horse can do; and I have generally found (of course with exceptions) the hunting dealer a more straightforward man in his dealings than the one ensconced in his counting-house, and with his ledger plodding over the £. *s.* *d.* he found there. I have partaken of the hospitality of many a hunting dealer. With such men, usually, their house, their cellars, and, in a proper way, their stables, are open to you. They must have a strong price for what is valuable, ask you a couple of hundred, and do not stand pettifogging about a five-pound note. Many a worthy tradesman in other articles will; and if a customer wanted to borrow a fifty-pound he would have a greater chance of its being at once done by the hunting dealer than if he walked up and down Fenchurch Street till his legs ached, trying to find one disposed to do the same thing. I do not go so far as to even insinuate that because we may know a man rides hunting, we are to jump to the conclusion that he is one liberal in mind or act; but I am happy in being able to pay hunting men the compliment of saying they, more or less, usually are so. The difference between the hunting man and the one who merely rides hunting is a very wide one. Of the latter lot there are as many close-fisted, narrow-minded gentlemen as any that grace the sublunary world. They hunt from vanity, for health and exercise, or to keep up familiarity with those that it is their interest to be familiar with, and, of course, many from liking the pursuit. I have, it is true, seen and known as liberal-minded men, and as good sportsmen, as ever looked a hound in the face, that were regular trading, plodding men by vocation. So I *have* seen a bustard on the Hampshire downs; nay, more, during five years I lived on them I think I saw four of these scarce birds.

Looking at it in a general way, it will be found that the man who merely rides hunting, first screws his groom down as closely as possible in point of wages, and will then turn his eye to any advertisement, and cock his ear to anything that throws out a hint as to saving in horse-provender. I know an individual, who is a very rich man; he keeps several living creatures that he calls (God forgive him) horses; he is always poking about to find a cheap one, and with some one of these he generally accommodates those with whom he has any monetary transactions. To oblige him, they are taken, but not (often) kept. He has asked my opinion scores of times relative to horse-keep; but whenever he did this, it was not as to what produced the best condition, but as to what could be done in the saving way. He once told me he had used bruised furze in Germany, as horse provender; and knowing there was a large gorse-cover near my house, he gravely recommended me to give furze to my hunters. I admitted I had never tried it for such purposes; but as gravely assured him I had heard that as a change for green peas, it made excellent soup. I do not know whether he tried it; but if he did, I will answer for it he tasted it before his cook put pepper and salt to it, that in case of failure these costly ingredients might not be wasted; and as the liquor would doubtless be the water a leg of mutton had been boiled in, the experiment would cost nothing; so probably the potage was essayed.

The man who merely rides hunting is one of the greatest pests a dealer has. A hack or buggy horse can be tried in a few minutes—a hunter cannot; so before such a man will buy, he wants all sorts of trials, and then probably would go on the same tack

as used to do—rest her in peace!—an old aunt of mine. She would go to a shop, occupy master and men for an interminable space of time, have different lengths cut off, and then learn the amount (say) £4 17s. "I shall not give it, they are very dear; there is £4; you may take that, or keep your goods." The master and men would, of course, stare and explain; but it was useless; and seeing she was in a good-looking carriage, they thought that perhaps no profit was better than offending her. With submission to the old lady's peculiarity, I should say that many a one is handed over now-a-days to the police for less cause of provocation.

In some proof of my stating that such men as I have mentioned really are pests as purchasers, I told a dealer some few months back that I thought I could, through a friend of mine, get him the custom of a very rich man and his friends. He, of course, thanked me for offering to do what I conceived would be a service to him. But his reply was short and pithy: "I would not give a shilling for the custom of the whole lot."

Now the regular hunting man—that is, the man who is so from sheer love of hunting—is, in a general way, quite a distinct character. He can expect no pecuniary advantage from his pursuit; and as he is satisfied with getting amusement for his outlay of money, it shows him to be at least no sordid character. Self-indulgent he certainly is; and this may be, in a certain degree, termed selfish. Be it so; the man who is self-indulgent is at least better than the miser, who neither indulges himself nor any one else; and say what your money-loving people may, the habit of spending money liberally does away with that inordinate love of it that causes many to feel each guinea they part from, with-

out expecting its return, as one of the life-drops from their heart. We are not to expect a man to forfeit his life to procure advantage or comfort for another; the man, therefore, who from habit has learnt to value his money as he does his existence, will no more give the one, or a portion of it, than he would the other for the benefit of the dearest friend he has; in fact, to perpetrate a pun, he would feel him very dear indeed if he cost him a sovereign.

The man who curtails his expenses and deprives himself of a portion of what constitutes his pleasure or luxury, in order to afford himself the means of contributing to the comfort of others, is doubtless a far more estimable character than he who spends his whole income, or nearly so, in self-indulgence. But such characters are far more rare than the bustards I before quoted. At least I conceive it to be so; for I have seen such birds, but I do not know such a man.

I stated at the commencement of this article that each man not only defends, but eulogises, the peculiar way or pursuit in which he pleases to spend his money; and great mistakes people make in the sophistry each calls to his aid in his advocacy, and in my usual way I will endeavour to bring a case in point.

I know a gentleman whose very good tastes and means have enabled him to form a collection that I have heard estimated at £60,000. His pursuits are pictures and medals. These pursuits the most enthusiastic fox-hunter, if he has any liberal ideas, must allow to be not only perfectly gentlemanly, harmless, and commendable, but of a higher order than his own. The gentleman possessing these had, a few weeks since, a goodnatured shy at me, by saying—"Horses eat, these do not." This was a palpable hit; there was no denying

the truth of it. But I could have said that there are those who could have made as home a thrust at the worthy collector as he had done at me; for had the money that from time to time has been paid for these articles of taste, and has all along lain dormant, been in the hands of Messrs. Paxton, Cubitt, or Stevenson, or others, it would have been employed; and now, instead of £60,000, would have been £120,000. And further, no doubt the owner of these holds it he enjoys his pets without expense. He certainly does enjoy them without outlay, as "they do not eat." But taking the moderate rate of ten per cent. in the employment of money, the £60,000 being unemployed, he is virtually paying £6,000 a year for his whistle; which if mine, I allow should go to a merrier tune, and I hope not a very ungentlemanly one either. I think I remember something about a publican and a sinner; no one could, of course, defend the latter, but I think something was said of the other. I am, I cannot deny it, the sinner; query, who is the publican?

They say "it is easy to find a stick to beat a dog." The fact of this learned aphorism is only comparative. It is easy enough if you are close to a hedge or coppice, but not quite so easy in the middle of Salisbury Plain. And, again, if it is easy to find the stick, it may not be easy to beat the dog; for if he is a bold one he won't stand it, and you will get the worst of the attempt; if he is a timid one he will take to his scrapers, and cut. Whistle you may, but the tune should be "Off she goes." The good-natured dog will do neither; he will not savage you for a little attempted correction; his pluck is too good to make him run away, but he will probably bolt between your legs and throw you on your back; be angry with him if you can. May I hope under the little

correction the worthy collector gave me, he will allow me to be the latter animal—a dog, and a sinner. Well, I hold it better to be these than an ill-conditioned devil who cannot take a joke, or a fool who cannot, or will not, allow superior merit in others where it exists.

So much has not only been written, but proved, as to the advantages hunting spreads over the country where it is carried on, that they require no notice here; but we will just allude to its expense to those pursuing it. To specify what this is in any precise way, would be impossible; for it, of course, depends on the extent to which it is carried, the situation of the person joining in it, and no little on the kind of man who hunts.

To the man who resides in the country, and keeps riding-horses, hunting may be considered as no expense at all; for whether he rides on the road for health, or with hounds for sport, it creates little or no increase in expense. The man who keeps additional horses as hunters, knows at once the expense of these; but there are others who cannot closely calculate their outlay. For instance, the man who hunts from London must keep his horses at livery in the country, or hire stabling; and further, he has expenses in his journeys, and expenses at inns. Bad riders, bad judges of horses, and bad managers of them, hunt at a great expense, from various circumstances. The only wonder is that such men should hunt at all, unless they are beginners. The man who thoroughly understands what he is about, hunts at very little expense, if he chooses to avail himself of his knowledge, by parting with his horses when a good offer is made him; for the horses of a good and bold rider are always in request. They must be good, or such men would not ride them. Some of them might be difficult or resolute to ride, and would not suit other men; but

good performers they must be, or will be made so in such hands. I therefore warn the man who hunts, not to be certain he gets a nag he can ride in the first flight, because he has gone there with the hunting man: his horse may be purchased—his nerve, hands, and head he keeps for other purposes. What? To make horses to sell to gentlemen who hunt.

We will now look a little at the turf, and those who make that their pursuit, instead of hunting, and endeavour not to let prejudice for or against either pursuit, or those following it, influence any ideas we may form.

There are men who hunt, but pay no attention to racing further than going for a day's recreation to a race-meeting in their immediate neighbourhood. There are men keeping race-horses, who never hunt; and men zealous in both pursuits. Of the two first characters, I must, in one particular at least, award the palm to the latter. The racing man has no dislike to the hunting one; but, speaking generally, the regular hunting man looks on the racing one with about the same kindly feeling as the huntsman to a pack of foxhounds regards a cry of beagles crossing his line, or a party of shooters in a cover he intends to draw. The hunting man, disguise it as he may, looks on the racing one as a shark—with what reason, it would be uncourteous to even hint at. This much we must in candour admit: the incentive of the hunting man is amusement and sport; that of nineteen in twenty of racing men is gain, or, at all events, the hope of it. It may be said or thought that, as it is a well-known fact that race-horses (taking the average) cannot pay their expenses, if a man desires gain only, he would not keep them. Such reasoning would be as fallacious as the principle is true. I have in other places stated, that no moderate race-horse, fairly run, can be

made to pay his expenses, in a public training stable, and under the ordinary circumstances in which race-horses are kept; but I never said an extraordinary or uncommonly good horse will not pay. I have not even said a moderate one will not pay under peculiar circumstances, if run fairly. Still less have I ever said a race-horse is not to be made to pay in the hands of a very clever scoundrel, with good judgment to back him, and neither principle nor honesty to mar his determination to make money *somehow*.

It might be thought that the numbers of persons who have been fleeced by the charlatans advertising their "tips," would deter any one possessing common sense from being victimized by these worthies. Daily experience, however, shows us it does not. A fool being born every hour is now an absolute calculation; for the tipping system forces on us the idea that, though children are not, as Sterne terms it, "brought into the world with a squirt," fools—that is, betting fools—must now be produced, like Novello's chickens, by steam, such is the influx of them. If people will not listen, therefore, to experience, "charm he never so wisely," in betting, why should we expect them to do so as to keeping race-horses for profit?

Different men commence racing under different impressions as to their chance of success in it. Some trust that they will get a colt that they can call by no appropriate name but El Dorado—that he will make a fortune. Eclipse did for O'Kelly—why not Mr. Softerbrain's colt for him? His sire could go "from end to end," and cut down any living horse at long lengths, till he was tantamount to a dead one. His dam, in shorter distances, could go like a d—l untied. Such a cross must

nick—but it don't. The colt goes to the corner, and the owner to Old Nick.

Another trusts to his judgment. "Oh, upright judge! oh, excellent young man!" "A Daniel! a Daniel risen to judgment!" He finds, however, there are other Daniels risen to judgment against him; and the result is, "his estates become confiscate to the state of"—not Venice, but John Doe and the famed Richard.

The next more modestly trusts to his luck—that is, such luck as he thinks ought to attend the fair sportsman. We will cheerfully allow that not only luck, but the best of luck, ought to attend such men. But it don't. He finds he is "down upon his luck." This brings his creditors down upon him, and then down he goes.

Another, equally modest in his estimation of his racing judgment and general pretensions, neither trusts to his colt, judgment, or luck: he will go on the advice of friends, and "stable information." Here, in parliamentary phrase, we cry "Oh, oh!" He does, however, trust to such unstable foundation; and when the call comes on to "divide," he finds the division is—he takes all the loss, and his stable friends all the profits, thus finding himself in a slight minority; and he gives up office.

We now come to another *débutante* on the—not stage, but turf. He is, in stage phrase, a most useful general actor. His line of character is wonderfully diversified. The bravo, the bully, the sycophant, are parts in which he is quite at home. The would-be gentleman he can sustain for a scene or two—perhaps through a whole act. The only part he cannot sustain is that of an honest man; he knows it, and therefore never plays in a piece where he would be called on to perform it. It may be

supposed such an actor always succeeds. Too often he does; but if ever hissed, provided he gets his pay, he cares not one farthing what is thought of his performance. If his audience tire of him in one place, he changes his theatre; still playing well the parts of bravo, bully, and sycophant—the latter particularly—carries a man on a long time in this world; and if these fail, as a little by-play, our hero can enact the blackguard anywhere. There is a far more pitiable part, however, that he is too cunning to even wish to play anywhere—that is, "the poor gentleman."

Every well-disposed person must look on such a character as the one represented with feelings of hatred and disgust; but, notwithstanding this, a knowledge of the world forces on us the unpleasing conviction that such a man takes the right course to make money. That honesty is the best policy, no one doubts. It is the best, if it were only that it affords a man the means of respecting himself; but, as the world goes, it is not in all cases the best policy, if making money alone actuates a man, and certainly is not so on the turf. On it, as things go, you must, in a general way of speaking, rob, or lose money. This, like many other truths, is a very sad and unpalatable one: it is fact, nevertheless. Which alternative an honourable mind will take, admits of no doubt. If to rob, or rather to circumvent, those that we know were trying the same game with us, was all, unpleasing as the act would be, it would admit of palliation; but the turf robber immolates friend promiscuously with foe; and yet here he has a shadow of excuse; for, verily, on the turf it is hard to know who is a friend. "To this complexion" has it "come at last."

It is quite possible, and very likely, that a particular man, especially if he be a young one, may get on the

turf from a love of the sport, the (very doubtful) *éclât* of keeping race-horses, and from hope of experiencing the harmless vanity of seeing his horses win. May the horses of such men ever win, so long as their owners continue in the same frame of mind! but there is little more chance of that than there is of their hopes being realized. The amount of winnings will very soon reign paramount to the vanity or pleasure of winning. This barrier between the gentleman and sportsman and the mere turfite once stepped over, leads its subject into a very precarious situation—namely, one that threatens annihilation to liberality of mind and high principle.

I have heard men affirm that they played from a love of the excitement of play. Such men (without at all intending it) assert what is not fact. They play for the hope of gain, not the pleasure the variation of chances affords. We would put one plain question to any man asserting that he played for the pleasure of excitement. The question should be this: "Suppose I insure your winning to a certainty every time you play hazard or make a bet, would you at once leave off play and betting?" If a gamester or betting man said he would, I should not believe him. If he owned he would not, it would show it was not the mere excitement that actuated him; for where there is no chance of loss, there can be no excitement, though plenty of avarice. It is fallacious, talking of playing for pleasure. No man takes a hazard-box in hand for amusement: conceal it as he will, he does it to win money if he can, let it belong to friend or foe.

I think it but quite fair to conclude that men who keep a stud of hunters, as well as a string of race-horses, are men of a more liberal turn of mind than the one who keeps the latter only. Keeping the hunters shows that

their owner can still derive pleasure from that which produces amusement only, and that keeping the latter has not destroyed such feelings; but if he gave up the stud, and kept to the turf, I should hold him strongly tainted with the disease of avarice.

If I saw a nobleman or gentleman keep his race-horses at home constantly, or frequently seeing them at exercise, work, and in their stables, I should give him credit for having other gratification in keeping them than the mere hope of gain. But where men scarcely ever see their horses but when running, their hope of gratification speaks for itself. Sportsmen, I venerate you all. May I therefore hope for forgiveness, if I say that, from having seen a good deal of both, I must, in a general way, say I do believe the hunting man outweighs the racing one on the score of liberality in pecuniary considerations, and indeed in most other particulars.

SPORTING AND ITS PATRONS.

That all those who devote their pens, time, money, or influence, in attempting to forward any project or undertaking, may be ranked as its patrons, so far as inclination goes, I conceive must be admitted as an axiom. This patronage, however, frequently becomes somewhat hypothetical, from the manner in which it is set about. Indeed, it is by no means an uncommon case, that the warmest friends of any circumstance unwittingly become the greatest drawback on its success, from the mistaken mode they take in endeavouring to promote the object. "Defend me from my friends!" is a too well-merited bit of sarcasm on mankind in general; but it often happens that it is realised by the conduct of those who really are sincere and warm in their endeavours to serve us. When speaking of servants, I have frequently said, "I would of the two prefer employing a rogue than a fool;" and for this reason—we may form a shrewd guess at something like what a rogue would attempt, by contemplating what it would be his interest to do; but we cannot guard against what a fool may do, not having any fixed criterion whereby to judge of what the hallucinations or vagaries of a weak mind might contemplate. A rogue might make away with a spare saddle and bridle, or some horse-clothing not in use: a fool might leave an entire horse loose while he went to fetch either. The first might rob us, till found out, of a few pounds; the

latter might occasion us a loss of a couple of hundred by his folly, and in some way or other we should daily be exposed to some serious catastrophe from his want of common foresight, arising from his want of common sense.

Patrons are sometimes prototypes of the latter character; and though they may not exhibit the same direct aberrations of intellect, from misguided enthusiasm injure the very cause they zealously approve, and endeavour to promote.

The attention we award to the praise or dispraise of any man or pursuit, is greatly influenced by the opinion we entertain, or form, of him from whom criticism emanates. Neither the ridicule nor applause of a man we have reason to set down as a vulgar one, would be attended to, should he advocate or deny gentlemanly habits; still less should we attend to him should he write against them. A theological work would not rise much in public estimation should we read a panegyric on it that we were aware was written by the groom we see in the circle of an amphitheatre; nor should we hold the opinion of the Archbishop of York or Canterbury as strictly orthodox, when relative to the training of two-year-olds, or Westhall the pedestrian; while on the other hand, if a favourable review of a work on divinity itself was written by a divine, in spirit and language that we could not approve, we should turn with disgust from the man, and it would go far towards lowering in our estimation the profession of which we knew him to be a member. The advocacy of such a man would indeed greatly tend to lower in our estimation everything of which he approved.

It is pretty much the same as regards criticisms on authors, or reviews of their works; the attention such

commands is influenced by our opinion of the qualification of the critic for his task, and the *animus* and general tendency of the periodical or journal in which such criticism appears; for if we know there exists, or it is usually thought there exists, any peculiar tendency and sentiments as regards peculiar pursuits or men, we naturally attach a certain degree of the praise or censure more to the peculiar opinion of the review than to the worth, or its reverse, of the work or its author. It is, therefore, only general opinion that is to be depended on as a safe and certain test.

Let us now come particularly to the patrons of sporting. Of these there are patrons of particular sports, and those of sporting in general—from the late (for we will not mention present names) Captain Mellish as a star among the patrons of racing; the Duke of Beaufort the same as regards fox-hunting; down to Mr. Sant, the patron of the prize-ring. We have patrons of yachting, cricketing, crack-shots, and as a *bonne-bouche*, a prince patronising the hitherto comparatively little practised noble and now royal sport of deer-stalking; and descending from the very highest to the very lowest, we have Jemmy Shaw, and his "Wonder" of rat-killing notoriety.

I think I have produced a tolerably profuse category of patrons; somewhat different, we must admit, as regards attributes of mind, position in life, and estimation as regards the opinion of the world, but still patrons.

Had the gallant captain, or the noble duke I have mentioned, chosen to have written on their separate pursuits, their works would have as much benefited each pursuit as did their patronage of them. Probably Mr. Sant, having been a very respectable man, a work of his on pugilism might have acted beneficially towards

the prize-ring; but I should very much doubt the lucubrations or morning studies of Mr. Jemmy Shaw much forwarding the cause of his particular pursuit; for I should rather opine that the result of such study would, as regards language, sentiments, and opinions, lead to the conclusion that if such emanated from the *magnus Apollo* of the rat-killing fraternity, ye gods! what must be those of his satellites?

Ascend we a little higher: and let us speak of sports—the pursuits of gentlemen, and gentlemen pursuing them. There is a too common practice, indeed error, among sportsmen, which consists in choosing for acquaintance only, or principally, men addicted to the same pursuits as themselves. This acts most prejudicially to their being liked or estimated favourably by society in general: it militates against it in two ways—first, hearing constant eulogiums on a particular pursuit, and on those most celebrated in it, a man is led to believe that such pursuit and such persons are worthy of an estimation in general society to which they have no earthly pretension; and secondly, the absence of hearing the opinions of those not of the same turn of mind might, and no doubt would, produce astoundment of the highest degree in the mind of the *mere* fox-hunter, if he found that out of his own clique he was set down as an ignorant booby, and only fit associate for the functionaries of the stable or kennel. Yet such would indisputably be the result of any man who made any sporting propensity the business of his life—the only difference being, the one mentioned is only in his element with the huntsman or feeder; another with the trainer or head lad; a third with gamekeepers; and another with pugilists, dog-fanciers, bear and badger-baiters, rat-killers, and gentlemen who in some way contrive to make the contents of

one man's pocket find its way into that of another; I suppose patronising the principle of a floating medium being beneficial in a trading country.

Of all propensities, barring criminal ones, I know of none so totally humiliating and demoralising as the determination of being estimated by, and hailed as a star among the lower orders or functionaries of any sporting pursuit. The being praised by, and looked up to by such persons, creates an indifference to the estimation of those whose esteem is desirable; and if once a man gives into the opinion that association with the low is to be excused because they are the actors in, professors of, or functionaries in any sporting pursuit, he becomes lost to all proper feeling, and will very naturally and properly be shunned whenever some unusual circumstance may induce him to, in a temporary way, emerge from the slough into which he daily sinks deeper and deeper, till he finally becomes as lost to those with whom he ought to have associated, as if he were no longer a denizen of the same world.

Another very material error into which people are apt to run is this: they judge of any favourite pursuit by the standing it holds in the estimation of others indulging in the same amusement or proceeding, forgetful that it ranks very differently in the estimation of those of an opposite taste. The mere fox-hunter forgets that though he has a peculiar estimation of a huntsman, and a peculiar veneration of his avocation, those who are not fox-hunters rank the huntsman no higher than the head-coachman, butler, or gardener, and can see no reason why he should be permitted any freedom of speech or manner not conceded to either of the other class of servant, and hold any approach to familiarity permitted him as much derogatory to a gentleman, as if permitted

it to either of the others. I may think, and do think, the following distinguishing feature in the case may be fairly brought in extenuation of a temporary familiarity with the huntsman, that would not exist under similar circumstances with the others, namely, we can with him, but not with them, converse on subjects in which we feel an interest; but I cannot blind myself to the fact, that though I and other fox-hunting men may hold this opinion, others of different mould do not; and as we are not to confine our acquaintance and associations to fox-hunters only, it behoves us so to conduct ourselves as to meet, as far as we can, the approval of general society; and we must bear in mind that it is only within a very short period that the zealous followers of field sports have rescued themselves from the charge made against them by mixed society, of being a set of boisterous, ignorant men, and held in former days by the refined man of ton and the world as only a shade or two above the tiller of the soil, as regards the manners and habits of civilised society. It therefore doubly behoves the fox-hunter and sportsman, for the credit of our favourite pursuits, to be particularly careful in his manners, habits, conversation, and associations, to keep up the enviable position sportsmen *now* hold in general and refined society. A mere fox-hunter should therefore, in these days, be held as a black sheep, throwing a shade on the bright *prestige* arrived at by his more refined brother sportsmen.

There is, however, a still grosser error some men fall into, which can only be excused by extreme youth, or extreme ignorance. This is, conforming their manners, habits, and sentiments so as to merit the approbation of the mere agent in any pursuit we follow. It matters not whether huntsman, jockey, shot, cricketer, yachts-

man, pugilist, pedestrian, or rat-killer; anything bordering on familiarity with either is a direct and gross dereliction from the conduct of a gentleman, and disgusts, if known, those who think correctly but not partially of such persons. He who, under such circumstances, would be pointed at as a leading man, is guilty of direct apostacy to his position and bearing as a gentleman; while, in truth, the fault would not rest with the pursuit, but with the man. Any man possessing feelings of warmer temperament than those of a fish, cannot but entertain wishes favourable to pursuits in which he indulges, and a certain *esprit de corps* equally inclining towards his brethren of the same ilk. He therefore becomes sensitive on the score of anything being done likely to lower what he esteems in the eyes of others. *Noscitur a sociis*, we learnt at school: thus, if any individual of a particular pursuit does what lowers him in the eyes of the right-judging, his compeers pay the penalty of his errors or misconduct.

I have not taken up this subject ill-advisedly, or without feeling it behoved some one to do so: a better man wanting, I beg to offer my opinions on it. My incentive to do it arose from the following circumstance:—

A friend of mine, a long-standing fox-hunter, one who really venerates a fox-hound, loves a pointer, setter, spaniel, or any dog used for field-sports, called on me a day or two back. He hates a bull-dog, whom he holds as a useless, dangerous animal, that ought not to be permitted to live. A young man drove by the door, in a very well-appointed phaeton. I made a remark on the sporting, yet gentlemanly cut of the *tout ensemble*.

"I'd bet ten to one," says my friend, "that though

the owner may be a gentleman by birth, he is a blackguard in habits!"

"Why?" said I.

"Did not you see that bull-dog between his knees?"

I winced to the quick at this, having in very early life had a breed of these, that even Bill Gibbons designated as beauties. How far my friend's implied sweeping general anathema against a man keeping such might hold good, as regards my particular person, is not for me to say; however, I kept no bull-dogs after I was twenty—a clause I may be allowed to bring forward in my favour. I could but feel that whatever the gentleman who passed might be, my friend's opinion was, as general judgment went, perfectly right.

This brought on a conversation relative to pugilism. My friend is a proved, brave, and fearless fellow as ever stepped in shoe-leather, but never put on a pair of boxing-gloves in his life: I, without pretending to his attributes, have, with many of our fighting-men; our opinions as regards the P.R. may therefore be readily supposed to vary considerably. But he dumb-founded me by remarking, after asking first if I had read a description of a particular fight—

"Did you not consider it a most confoundedly low-lived, blackguard production?"

I admitted the particulars were couched in somewhat technical language.

"Now," continued my friend, "I make no objection to the doings of such brave men as Gully, Belcher, Gregson, or Oliver, or the whole of the honest part of the corps being chronicled as much as you please; but if the prize-ring is to be encouraged, as having a beneficial national tendency, it ought to be the study of its patrons to render it, and the actors in it, as respectable

as possible—not to lower it by using terms in description that can only be tolerated in a pot-house. Might it not as well be said that Doublejoint got a severe straight blow on the nose, ear, jaw, or stomach, as to say it reached his 'smeller,' 'listener,' his 'left chaff-grinder,' or that it paid a visit to his 'victualling-office?' A blow on the nose, from which the blood instantly followed, is quite as clear as 'drawing his cork, which caused the claret to fly in all directions.'"

I could not deny the truth of this, but replied it would not be so well liked.

"Liked!" cried my friend, "by whom? by the lowest of the low, who are taught a zest for such language, from the want of less offensive being laid before them. If men who write, and whom consequently we look on as superior to those they write about, will make us form the opinion of them we must, from their style of writing, what, in the name of all that is low, must their inferiors be? Depend on it, such descriptions only encourage a morbid and vitiated taste in the lower orders, disgust the better, and tend to keep in disrepute the very proceedings they are intended to encourage."

I would not, after this, have let my friend into the exact secret of my own doings in very early life, for one of the best horses in his stable. My opinions have, in a mitigated degree, been pretty much the same as his for many years. He has satisfied me of the truth of them; and their spirit equally bears on what should influence sporting men in following each and all their sporting pursuits.

I have always recommended to younger sportsmen than myself, and to the very few less informed, what I know to be good tact, and good taste:—"If you are a sportsman, ever make it a rule to be the very last man

in company to bring forward sporting as a subject of conversation, unless among those who can duly appreciate, converse on, or discuss such subjects; and then the less you mix with them the better. If a man likes such society and such men, my only advice to him would be, "Go into and mix with no other; for if you do, you will be set down as a kind of hybrid—half ignorance, and the rest worse."

Very young men are apt, unless they meet with a severe check, to indulge in technicalities, and a kind of half-slang, that they imagine shows them deeply versed in every pursuit they choose to mix in or patronise. Should driving be their propensity, place them near a coachman: they would not for worlds use the term reins; they talk of the "ribbons." Buckling or unbuckling the reins, they would hold as terms only to be used by their grandfather. But "pinning the ribbons" is quite the thing. They with a knowing wink talk of "the prentice" in the "till," the "monkey," or "gammon-board." Old Vaughan, Black Will, or Holmes fooled such young 'uns "up to their bent," for which they got five shillings in lieu of two, and a good laugh at the "'un" (knowing one) in the evening. All this is wretched taste, and such men as I have mentioned had quite sense enough to know it was.

The prize-fighter, supposing on any particular occasion half-a-dozen gentlemen chose to take a dinner at the Castle, in Holborn, would be obliged and flattered by being desired to come up; be asked a few questions, and then told to order what he pleased below. He would respect those who gave the order, and, above all, would honour the "Captain," by swearing he was a trump. But the younger tyro who sits in the parlour, talking (I beg pardon—chaffing!) with all he meets

there, and treating all the company, is merely held a tolerated intruder; laughed at as an ass; and, even by such persons, held in sovereign contempt. The being hailed by applause on entering the room by such persons, is no more flattering to a man, as a gentleman, than is the applause bestowed on the entrance of the clown complimentary to him as a man of sense. He is hailed as something to laugh at, and be amused by; the other as something to profit by, and be laughed at afterwards.

We will now speak of writing and sentiments. Nimrod is a name that, as a writer on sporting subjects, will long be remembered. No man's works, of a similar kind, have been more generally read; this in a very great measure arising from his having had the good taste never to permit low expressions, or consecutive slang, to disgrace his pages. He was a man of education, and, I believe I am correct in saying, in no way addicted to low habits, or, unless for the express purpose of gaining information, to low associations. There were many men in Nimrod's time, and since, who knew, and know, six times over, far more of hunting than ever he did. Actæon for one. His *Notitia Venatica* is a large volume, full of direct practical knowledge and well-digested opinions; a book of reference, that will ever be regarded as indisputable; not such amusing light reading to the generality of readers as Nimrod's *Chase;* but Actæon has since shown himself, in the *Sporting Magazine*, equally capable of handling his subject artistically, when he has not merely practical experience to dilate on. Of race-horses, or the training them, Nimrod knew comparatively nothing; yet he furnished good-gathered information, which is enough for the public. His driving qualifications were—if I may trust to the given opinion

of coachmen who knew him—very mediocre indeed; yet his *Road* must ever be read with zest; and if it only depended on the uncommonly well-told story of the old gentleman travelling by the "Comet," "Regulator," and "Mail," that in itself alone would show what was indisputably the case, that Nimrod possessed descriptive powers of a high order, set forth in language that placed his subject, as well as himself, in a very advantageous point of view. Had he descended to slang, or low technicalities, his works would not have outlived him; for, except his Condition of Hunters, many men possess far more practical information on every subject on which Nimrod wrote.

Whiz, whose contributions to the *Sporting Magazine* all its readers know, has not been eclipsed—I may say equalled—by any one on road subjects; his pen, like Stevenson's pencil, has produced us sketches truly graphic. Had he written a work of this kind, and got the other gentleman to have illustrated it, I can conceive they would have produced a work that would have been read with avidity, and cherished as a pleasing reminiscence to this day; for with all the fun and characteristic delineations of Whiz, often of low characters, he with perfect good taste managed to bring them directly before us, but still in such language that, however descriptive it might be, was yet that of a gentleman.

I am quite aware that this article, which is of somewhat an unusual character, will with some persons, and in some places, be held in great reprobation. This must ever be expected where a writer condemns any line of conduct pursued by particular persons. I can readily conceive situations where it will be honoured by the title of "humbug," by all the company assembled. It has but one chance in its favour. I mention no names,

so who will allow it hits hard enough to induce him to say, "*Did you mean me?*"

I have heard the question mooted as to whether the bringing the crimes of the felon, the brutality of the savage, or the degrading conduct of the profligate, before the public, is attended with beneficial results, or the reverse. I am in no way capable of deciding on such a question; but this I know: if the propriety of putting down Greenwich Fair or retaining it was suggested, the bringing forward all the low and profligate scenes enacted there would not be likely to turn the balance of votes in its favour.

It is pretty much the same as regards either persons or pursuits: if we permit that which is reprehensible to appear, it of course brings such persons or pursuits forward in very questionable points of view. Any bad specimen should be carefully kept out of sight.

We will return to foxhunting. That I must be permitted to hold as the prince—nay, emperor of field sports; admitting at the same time that racing tugs hard at my heart, while the other has it in its grasp. "Oh!" cries some one—and I know many very estimable men who would join in the Oh!—"I scarcely ever knew a man fond of racing, a *true* foxhunter." Perhaps not, gentlemen; but it is not yet clearly proved that the *true* foxhunter is a character particularly of an enviable notoriety, though held as such in your estimation. For I suspect that if a man hunted four days a week, and forewent the remaining two for the sake of a ball, musical party, the opera, or a sale of pictures, he would not come up to your ideas of his being the *true*: in short, unless his heart and soul were in the kennel, or the meet, he would not challenge the undivided applause of you who glory in the title of true foxhunters. If

such is the case, I pray you vote me out of your society, and let me enjoy my foxhunting when I please to take it, which, like other amusements, I mean to be in its turn. If you mean it to really be the business of your life, I do not, for I do not mean to confine myself exclusively to the "*trues*."

We will suppose one of the "trues" introduced by a friend to a pleasant and aristocratic family. Possibly while dinner lasted, his attention to his repast might make an equivocal sort of excuse for his want of attention to anything or anybody else. The cloth removed, neither hounds nor horses being mentioned, he passes off as a stupid being, that the lady sitting next to him earnestly prays, and inwardly determines, shall never again be brought into so near propinquity to her. It is possible—nay, probable, he may have ventured so far as, "Do you ride, Ma'am?" An answer in the negative shows him no communion can exist there; if yes, and that is followed by asking him if he has seen the last new opera, the probable answer that he never saw an opera, or had any wish to see one, equally satisfies the lady as to the absence of any communion in so barren a quarter. The ladies retire; he finds no foxhunting introduced, so votes the whole party a set of humbugs, seizes on the port, and when the move is made for the drawing-room, and from the table, he holds them as humbugs double-distilled, who won't drink, and are fit for nothing that, he thinks, ought to occupy the attention of men. He mechanically follows, never having felt more uncomfortable in his life, unless when a frost threw him on his own resources to while away the day in his stable; or strolls down to Farmer Somebody, where he is made the lion of the day, and

deliberates *pro* and *con.* as to making the pretty blue or black-eyed daughter of his host mistress of the Hall. We have him, however, at present in a far different sphere. Hoping to draw him out in compliment to his introducer (God help the man !), the lady of the house tries his knowledge of, or *penchant* towards, music, drawing, dancing, the theatres; finds none of these come under his patronage. "Her daughter will be happy to engage him at chess." He does not play at chess, but does draughts. The reply is quite satisfactory. His introducer (regretting having been so), in mercy to him and himself, gives a whisper, and, unperceived, gets the *true* foxhunter away.

Let me ask those who hold a man conversant with hunting *only*, whether even they can be so blind as not to see that such characters as I have briefly sketched are not certain to bring that of the sportsman into direct obloquy with men possessing a mind beyond the mere hound they follow, or the horse they ride. Yet the character is not an overdrawn one: it shows no absolutely vulgar being, no demi-savage; but merely a man in whom we find no attribute or refinement, no taste for anything intellectual, or what is esteemed or admired in good society. I regret to say, even in these days, there are many prototypes of my supposed hero of the chase. The man who takes his hunting as one of, or the chief of his winter amusements, but does not make it the aim and end of life, blushes when he sees such "bookless, sauntering youths" as we do, when we see a gentleman derogate in any conduct from the character he ought to uphold and act up to.

There are three classes of foxhunters—the hunting groom, huntsman, or whip; the boisterous and some-

what ignorant country half-gentleman, who makes ordinary farmers or huntsmen his companions ; and the man who hunts, as he does all other things, like a gentleman. The habits, tastes, associations, language, and accomplishments of the man are a pretty sure criterion whereby to judge to which class he belongs.

WHAT WE ARE NOW DOING.

Such a subject would, I should say, afford ample material to furnish-out half-a-dozen honest portly quartos, and if the brains of the writer were as prolific as the theme is copious, such a work might not lose in interest from its extension; fortunately, however, for me, and still more fortunate for my readers, my observations must be curtailed to a limited space.

We are told that when Dr. Johnson, whose urbanity of manners and speech were not always commensurate with his learning, after a lady had brought forth her great musical talent to gratify, as she concluded it would, the feelings of the Doctor, was apprised that the piece the lady had performed was extremely difficult—"I wish to God! madam," replied he to his informant, "it had been *impossible!*"

I have stated that the limits of this article must be confined to a certain space; it will be well for me if some doctor does not say, I wish it had been altogether omitted. It is quite possible such a circumstance might have been desirable, but it did not arrive; so the article went.

It is said "there is nothing new under the sun." Allowing this as an axiom, we may come to the inference that we are doing pretty much the same as has been done before; but if we only look at the saying as hypothetical, we may venture argument in favour of our doing a vast deal that was never dreamed of in former years. Nay, further, we may, I should say, roundly assert that, dreamt of or

not, at all events much that we do now never was done before; for if it had been since the time men could by writings transmit information of their doings to posterity, we should have heard of things having been done, that we are sceptical enough to consider as being perfectly "new under the sun." And if these things were done before we had the art of making such facts known, I do not see on what basis the saying is founded, so little complimentary to the "march of intellect."

Probably our worthy ancestors, who pertinaciously eschewed all innovation on what was doing and had been done in the world of theirs, considered that because land was ploughed, sowed, and reaped, that flocks increased, and men ate, and that this had been done from time immemorial (save and except when Adam did not work or eat mutton), therefore, there was really "nothing new under the sun." But these good people would find that, though the sun of 1856 is the same orb of warmth and light it was in 56, it is not so with what is done under it. How far the spirit of man, his misery or happiness, may have retrograded or advanced during the eighteen hundred years, is a subject that would involve philosophical and ethical discussion, to which I am not competent, nor this article suited.

There was a time when the 'squire of the village made hunting the business of his life, save that he might be, *par excellence*, a justice of the peace; in which case, unless a man was brought before him for poaching, a crime that roused every energy of the dispenser of justice, this worthy representative usually snored while his better-informed clerk investigated the merits, or rather demerits, of the alleged misdemeanour, and then roused his superior to sign an acquittal or a mittimus, as the case might be. Those were times

"When wretches hung that jurymen might dine."

But now, though hunting is carried on in a style that our ancestors knew not of, it is very properly not the business or occupation of life, but what it should be—merely one among its several amusements ; and thus, though sporting subjects are looked for in a sporting periodical, something like a manifestation that the writers of them have ideas above mere dogs and horses, as well as "buttons," is expected. Sam Chifney, who wrote that most ignorant and egotistical of all egotistical productions, "Genius Genuine," could doubtless have informed us of all that was doing, or had been done, at Newmarket from the Craven to the Houghton Meeting, but not quite in the same style that we rejoice in when reading the "Turf Pencillings ;" and erratic—nay, I will not flinch the word—wild as are some of the effusions of Craven, the slightest discrimination cannot but detect in the writer the man of talent, education, and literary research. If all could write as well as "Uncle" can "scribble," we might congratulate them, and honestly too.

Will Watch, of Dibdin celebrity, could have by word of mouth, or probably "somehow" in writing, very truthfully described a cruise, and probably the denizens of the Point at Portsmouth would greatly prefer his style to that of Lord William Lennox picturing the same thing ; but those not inhabiting or frequenting the same locality are not, or would not be content with the bare description of how the vessel behaved, or what were the soundings at such particular points. Instead of such, we get a graphic and spirited description, indicative, or rather illustrative of mind and feelings that raise our own to something like poetic imagination.

I have not the remotest doubt but that the sportsman of former days would not merely affect to sneer, but actually would sneer at those of the present time. It would not

be enough for him that men ride better, and lend their aid and means to a greater extent than they did formerly to promote field sports; that they do not devote all their time and attention to the kennel and stable (the former particularly) would be sufficient to damn their pretensions as sportsmen in the eyes of those who, from want of inclination and habit to occupy their mind by superior pursuits, held the knowing the pedigree of every hound in their own kennel, and also of those in their neighbours', as a species of knowledge that half the hours of their lives were well bestowed in attaining. Raise up your hands in wonder and derision if you like, ye huntsmen, whips, feeders, and those of such ilk, when I candidly admit I no more care whether such or such a hound was by Lord ——'s Chaunter out of Sir ——'s Merrylass than I do whether the omnibus horses of the 'bus that carries me were bred in York or Lincolnshire. I admire hounds doing their work well; but, though the strain may be, and is, of great importance to the master, it can be of no importance to the stranger merely hunting with the pack. It is a treat to see thirty couple of fine hounds in kennel, and I should, as a sportsman, be mortified if I could not point out the particular beauties or defects among them; but whether the principal sire was Gog, Magog, or Hobgoblin, I should only hold it loss of time to inquire. Let me see them try, find, chase, and kill. If they did this as they ought, it matters not to me if the d—l got them; if they did not, my only wish, without farther inquiry, would be, that they had not been got at all.

If I dine with a friend, I am gratified, for my own and his sake, to see his servants do their business properly. Their connexions may be of some importance to their master, as indicating how far, from example and precept,

it is likely that they may be trustworthy or the reverse; but to me, it must be quite immaterial whether they descended from Giles Jotho the ploughman in Yorkshire, or Knowing Bill the dog dealer and stealer of Seven Dials. It does not follow, from this, I am ignorant of what sort of an artist a servant in his particular department is. I should look to the breed and bringing up of my own, but need not be expected to waste my time on learning that of all my friend's domestics, nor need I that of his hounds. It would be said, perhaps, by Hugo Meynell that showing this indifference proved I was not fond of hounds. It certainly would prove I was not as fond of his hounds as he was; and, further, it would prove the fact that I should, as companions, prefer more intellectual and refined ones in the drawing-room, after hunting, to the dog or bitch pack in their kennel. Many who perhaps are better sportsmen, probably would not. *Chacun à son goût.* I must, however, as matter of opinion, say, that "what we are doing now" in sporting matters is of a superior order to what was doing—when? When men were demi-savages; held literary attainment beneath a man of fortune, accomplishments effeminacy, and had no ideas beyond the stable and the kennel, excepting they certainly knew "a hawk from a hand-saw."

There are numbers of persons who, from their position in life or their avocations, know so little of sportsmen, that they form their opinions of them from what they have read descriptive of such characters years ago; others, without this excuse, arrogate to themselves the right of judging of the manners, habits, and attributes of the hunting man with no better foundation on which to build their opinions than what they conceive such men likely to be. Such persons would not expect much, or any, elucidation of talent from the sportsman; but those who

are aware that numberless men of the highest talent and refined education are among our most enthusiastic sportsmen, estimate the capabilities of such men by a far different standard. I think, therefore, there are many who will join me in expressing surprise that since the days of Somerville nothing worthy the name of a poem has been produced on the subject of field sports. That it arises from no want of talent among those who make such pursuits their chief winter amusement, is quite certain; and that such sylvan scenes afford ample scope for the exercise of poetic talent, we have seen by the solitary poem that has been produced. Almost every other theme has been taken up and written on by various poets, the imagination of each producing something new, something indicative of his fertility of mind; but in a country where field sports are entered into with more zest, and carried on in a style unknown in other countries, one poet is allowed to "walk over the course" of fame without any competitor challenging the laurel that decked his brows while living, and immortalize his memory when gone.

Of prose writers on such subjects we have had, and have, plenty and to spare. The subject or subjects have been written on till they have become almost the same things over and over again, somewhat exemplified by the couplet—

> "At the siege of Belle Isle
> I was there all the while;
> I was there all the while
> At the siege of Belle Isle."

If each and most of these prose writers think they can produce something new in mere practical observations, how wide a field is open to poetic imagination! and

still adhering to truthful representation. We become *blazéd*, nay bored, by mere prosaic description or synonymous information; but the poet can give a beauty, a freshness to even a worn-out subject by the music of his words and the imagery of his mind. But in this, what are we doing now? Literally nothing.

What are we doing in racing matters? I think those who wish well for the turf will rejoice in saying, We are doing things better than they have been done. I do not mean better than they *ever* have been done, but less badly than they were done during some years since. Direct, bare-faced robbery does not come constantly before us; at all events, when such things take place, a little sense of decency is shown, and, as anything like a licentious expression should be, they are neatly wrapped up. Doncaster is rescuing her once fair fame from latter disgrace. It is now just possible that if a man has a good horse, and he is well watched, he may, if it suits the owner's book, be permitted to win. These are not mere steps, but seven-league strides in amendment of racing results. Not that it is to be for a moment supposed that the *morale* of the racing world has got to such ascendancy that the winner of (say) the 2000 will be at all sure to beat a far worse field should he meet such a short time after his great victory over a better. But then who shall openly impugn imperial Cæsar, or those who covertly can mar his sway? Cæsar has "gone off" since the memorable day. "He has not got over the drilling he got for the 2000." "If Nat, Frank Butler, or Charles Marlow had ridden him in the latter race, he would have won." Unfortunate Jock, if put up to ride a horse after a great achievement! But it is really good policy to have every excuse at hand, when we want to do anything that is not quite "straight running." Who

can say a horse has not gone off when his appearance shows that he has?—who can say he does not feel the effects of the "drilling spoken of," when it is quite evident *something* has affected his fitness as to condition? Nat, Butler, or Marlow can, and we have no reason to doubt would, make anything win that had winning in him; but lucky and clever little Wells, even with his tiny weight, could not bring a horse in front if he has not the powers to get there. "Horses are very uncertain in their running." Truly, they are so at times, under any management; but intention is far more uncertain than the horse, to those not in the secret. I for one can pardon all this; for it only affects the Ring, for which I never had, or have, the least feeling of sympathy; and if an owner is permitted the vast privilege of having his orders carried out, it is, I think, quite fair, as regards him and the bettors, to let every one take care of himself. If I advise you to back my horse when knowing I do not mean (I beg pardon for the insinuation, and will say expect) him to win, as Falstaff says, "call me horse" or rascal, for I should deserve it; but if you advise yourself, I am not bound to sacrifice my interest to prove you a prophet.

Few, if any, men would buy, breed, or keep race-horses unless expecting gratification or advantage from so doing; consequently anything that frustrates his wishes as regards them tends to driving him off the Turf. But thwarting the interest of mere bettors will not do this; for there would be always betting enough among racing men to make the Turf attractive; but if a man cannot calculate on what his horse will be allowed to do, he will not be weak enough to bet, though thousands who scarce know enough of a race-horse to distinguish between one fit to win and a mare in foal, will back their own judgment. I have seen hundreds of these sapients

wink knowingly, and in their favourite phrase declare "they know where the money is on," when they know as much about the matter as they do of the pecuniary resources of the Ottoman Empire. They come like sacrifices to the altar they raise for themselves. Let them, if a hecatomb of such could benefit better men, let the offering recur as often as a race meeting takes place: their prototypes would in time learn to keep their fingers out of the fire.

What are we doing in steeple-chasing? We are doing an immense business in that way—for a business it really is; and I should say we are doing far more good to our continental neighbours than ourselves; for we did not want steeple-chasing as an incentive to get the best breed of horses in our country, for we had them as hunters and race-horses: our neighbours had not. They found this out, and now give the best prices for horses, and liberal prizes for them to contend for. It is rumoured there is no little partiality shown in some places as regards the awardment of such prizes. Perhaps it is so, but, as the true spirit of the sportsman gets infused among them, this will no doubt be set to rights; and as a beginning with a nation lately devoid of any sporting propensities worthy the name of them, and with a people fond of excitement and spectacle, steeple-chasing was and is far more likely, than with their habits would have been the sudden introduction of fox-hunting, to teach them there are other amusements of as exciting a nature as, though widely different from, *la danse*. They are fine fellows, with all the courage and quickness of the lion in them; still a cross with the bull-dog will be advantageous to them, while, as we are a trading nation, a large importation of their urbanity of manner will in time do us much good. "*Tout cela viendra*;" and I

trust the time will also come when we shall hear of My Lord with his dozen hunters going to his friend Le Marquis on a visit during the hunting season.

A little work that has lately appeared on the subject of the description of horse now in use in our cavalry, tends to the inferring that "what we are doing now," and indeed what we have been long doing, in such matters, has been, and is, wrong. The gallant officer, the author of this book, is so far better qualified than I to judge of this, that even if I differed in opinion with him, I certainly should not attempt to dispute his; but as regards the breed of our light cavalry horses, I consider his observations perfectly correct. I only base my ideas on what I know to be the powers of horses in general, under certain weight and exposed to certain hardships and casualities.

Those who have flattered me by reading what I have written, are quite aware that I have ever advocated the using of horses as highly bred as we could get them, provided we got sufficient strength for the purpose to which we put them. I suspect the author alluded to does not object, or mean to object, to high breeding, but as being conducive to producing an animal too light for military purposes.

We will suppose the ass to be able (and it is said he is) to carry a greater load, in proportion to his own specific gravity, than can a horse: this in no way shows he is adequate to a weight the horse can carry. It is something like this with high breeding. We know that thorough-bred horses of good symmetry are vastly stronger than low-bred ones of the same or even somewhat larger size. This, however, only goes so far as where the attributes of the thorough-bred constitute his strength. These attributes are wind, speed, and game

or bottom. If we wanted a horse to stand under five-and-thirty stone weight, a thick or even broken-winded dray-horse would probably do so better than Haco; but make it twenty, and require the dray-horse with that weight to get into quick motion, Haco would beat him, though under such enormous weight. We see light, nay, spindle-limbed thorough-breds carry a weight far beyond what we should suppose they could, four miles across country, in a steeple-chase. This only lasts, on an average, say from twelve to fourteen minutes. The same horse would be dreadfully distressed to bear a dragoon, fully accoutred, on his back for eight or nine hours. The closer and more compactly-made horse, though only quite half-bred, would do it better. The speed, wind, and game of the thorough-bred are not called into play in the troop horse; for wind and game are only properly tried when speed and distance are required. Gameness and wind will not avail much where the back and loins are under a weight they are incompetent to sustain. If troops were wanted to charge four miles under even twelve stone, at a greater pace than the enemy, mount them, by all means, on strong thorough-bred horses; but where the charge is only a very few hundred yards, under, on an average, of perhaps sixteen stone, I should look for far greater strength; for a horse must be slow indeed if not equal to the usual pace of the fastest charge; and I think it would be found that in a charge of a couple of hundred yards at top speed there would not be any great difference between the time of the Blues or Lancers; for the speed of large, strong horses is often surprising in very short distances.

I think I remember to have somewhere said that I quite believe thorough-bred horses "would draw one of our once eight-horse road waggons better and far

faster than waggon-horses." I have no doubt they would; but then we must have twelve instead of eight, for in such case the bodily weight of the large animals then used did half the work. The pace averaged three miles an hour; make that pace six, and the twelve thorough-breds would be at Newbury by the time the old gee-who's got to Maidenhead Thicket.

Fond as I am of the thorough-bred, I hope it will be understood I do not mean the mere *things* we daily see in our streets. Even with hounds, a weedy, racing-looking animal always carries about him the appearance of having been bought for twenty pounds—and quite enough for such animals.

I am no advocate for the usual specimen of thorough-breds in harness: they have a poor, and what I can only call a comfortless look about them, and produce in me a feeling something similar to what I should experience should I see a lady in full dress and white satin slippers paddling along a dirty and wet pavement. Give me four something the cut of Sir Hercules, Plenipo, Bran, or Ratcatcher, I should glory in a team of such; and something of the kind is always to be got even at a moderate price—say £100, for I have had many—but then it must have been proved beyond doubt that such horses could not race, at least, not so as to pay expenses. Mendicant, we will say, could, and at one time would have cost a large sum; but, suppose a man had got her, she would have looked a mere wretch in harness. She could go over the turf, but even by the cover side would have looked a haggard, inferior animal. I have had some of the best and most delightful horses I ever possessed for harness that were quite thorough-bred: but they were muscular, and a comfortable-looking sort; and perhaps, nay, most probably, the very symmetry that was their

recommendation to me, was the very circumstance that had rendered them good for nothing as racers.

The subject has been again brought forward of trying English against Eastern-bred horses. The Pacha, to do him justice, seems to wish the thing tried in the true and fair spirit of a sportsman. If half-a-dozen picked English and Eastern horses were pitted against each other on a description of ground of a fair galloping sort, and each jockey had positive orders not to uselessly or severely punish his horse, the proof might take place without any very censurable suffering to the animals engaged in it; but if it is to be—which I quite foresee it will be, if tried—the actual butchering of two good animals, to try which may be made by whip and spur to stagger home first, I shall do what I never did before—blush for my countrymen, and, in such case, the prostituted name of sportsmen.

"THE TIME O'DAY."

When men's habits, dress, manners, and expressions, bordered on or evinced a far nearer approximation to a cast of character that can only be described as "slang," the heading of this article was an expression very rife among those who thought they were (but most unquestionably were not) a part and parcel of a class to be admired and respected. No greater mistake ever warped the direction of the mind from its straight line to deformity: had such deformity resulted from natural causes, it would have called forth pity, and the liberal mind would have abstained from levelling the shaft of ridicule at what had "fallen from" its "high estate." Pity a being owning such a mind we must; so we do any one whose conduct is a tissue of weakness and folly. Such pity is, however, of a far different character from that drawn forth by the fall or misfortunes of the great and deserving; for the pity awarded to folly is accompanied by contempt.

Many men fancy that in boasting of an utter carelessness of the opinion of the world, they evince a greater superiority of mind than those who shape their conduct with a proper deference to the usages of society: if they really think so, they are only laying bare the weakness of their mind, instead of manifesting the supposed superiority of it. We will trust, however, for

the credit of our fellow-men, that few really do entertain such erroneous ideas, for such men *deceive themselves;* they are most anxious for the applause of others, and where and in what they assume a character and habits contrary to those pursued by the generality of men, they do so to "seek the bubble reputation" among a particular *clique*, whose suffrages they seek as more according with their ideas of style and excellence than the conduct and opinions of the ordinary class of society.

Many men aim at the very equivocal and dangerous notoriety of peculiarity of conduct: if it is peculiarly commendable, no doubt they will very deservedly rank higher in the estimation of their compeers and society than do others of no prominent virtue; but if their eccentricity merely evinces a departure from the usual habits of men in the same position of society, their vanity must be overweening indeed if they imagine they can show the rest of the world that *they* are and have been in error. Eccentricity is really (not very modestly) telling the world this, and the consequence is (that world holding that its collective members really know as well what is right or wrong as a solitary eccentric), instead of being astonished at, or influenced by, his mode of acting, sneers at the folly, and contemns the presumption. Few men are so weak, or possess feelings so obtuse, as to affect singularity that they suppose would render them the ridiculed or despised of universal society; but, on the contrary, let them deceive themselves as they may, each man affecting peculiarity of conduct, be it shown in what particular it may, inwardly chuckles, while he says to himself (in whatever terms he may choose to select), what is tantamount to—

"This is the time o'day."

This brings us to consider a little the general applica-

tion and tendency of that unique expression "slang." Of its tendency there can be but one opinion entertained, namely, that it goes very far towards rendering every man under its influence the very reverse of what the Duenna describes Isaac as being, for it makes him very much of the scamp, and very little of the gentleman; it evinces a mind capable of no higher effort than an attempt at superiority in what and among whom to be held as superior is utter degradation.

I have called the term "slang" unique—I consider it so; for, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it is purely English. All nations have their *jeu d'esprits*, their *équivoques*, quaint idiomatical terms and expressions, as also emblematic allusions, &c., but not "slang." For instance, *le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle* is quaint and applicable on many occasions—in sooth, the reader may perchance think it applicable to the trouble of reading this article compared with the article itself (I am sorry it is not a better one); but whether the saying be applied or not, it is not "slang." "The kiddy's fly to the gammon," I think my readers will agree with me, borders very closely on what is. Oh, my poor country! such terms are indigenous to your soil, there's no denying it. Pat, with all his richness of brogue, his bulls, and quaint expressions, knows comparatively nothing of "slang." Many a man is a greater ruffian than John Bull; but for an accomplished, thoroughly-versed, thoroughly-paced bl—gd, London only can produce a perfect sample. We are not a particular people, nor do we confine ourselves to sex or age; we have specimens, and choice ones too, of every sort and age; we have the hopeful embryo of eight years of age, who can cry when he pleases, and blaspheme to horrify the mature hearer; Mr. Robin could not abstract the contents of a pocket half so

adroitly, wonderful as is his performance in legerdemain. We have the more experienced youth of twelve (for wonderfully precocious such youths are), with a pipe in his mouth, a head to plan, and a hand to execute, who can and dares "do all that may become a man," and a little more. We next see him, in accordance with "slang," in "swell toggery," his hair hanging over his coat collar, unless, peradventure, his taste leads him towards the prize-ring, which, *mirabile dictu*, does make him a shade less absolutely sunk in infamy; if so, we see him with his locks shorn of their "fair proportions," and cut close to his justly-styled "knowledge-box;" he is ready for anything, from "nimming a reader" in the streets to "chanting a stave"—where and with whom we will leave to imagination, further than that the ready smiles of the fair applaud what long-uncalled-forth blushes have lost even the pretension to contemn. We have him, in the matured man, in the dress, and with the (somehow contracted) address of a gentleman, foreigner or English, as suits the occasion—head and chief of a gang (I beg his and their pardons)—a society of gentlemen (cracksmen), flying at the highest game, from pigeoning the unthinking youth, to planning the wholesale robbery of a nobleman's mansion. Should his lucky star have been ever in the ascendant, and transportation have been avoided, we shall have him anon as a hoary reprobate, "old, used up, and turned out of the stud," singing, in seedy attire, in some low class of infamy, songs at which decency shudders, rendered doubly disgusting when coming from the lips of age; and for what? for the pence he may collect, and for the gratuitous indulgence in the liquid-fire, that only increases the hectic cough that is fast hurrying him to a grave that will shortly hide the remains of vice, infamy,

and all that is despicable and disgraceful to the name of man, and only eulogised by his quondam friend, if, in utter hardness of heart, he shows "game to the last," by uttering some "slang" expression showing he had forfeited all claims to respect here, though let us trust not all hope of mercy hereafter.

Such have been the consequences to many who began life in the indulgence of the habits, and mixing with those whose highest attributes were proficiency in "slang."

Now turn we to something of more cheering aspect. "That's the time o'day."

I have ever considered the terms "fashionable," "in good taste," or "gentlemanly," as quite indescriptive of any general way of doing anything; for what is the one or the other, is only so as being in accordance with what persons of fashion, good taste, or gentlemanly habits are in the habit of doing. I make no doubt but that our ancestors ate their peas with their knife: hence the then fashion of the knives being made with the old round and broad ends to their blades; most certainly peas could not be eaten with the two-pronged forks then in use. Consequently we may infer it was perfectly *en règle* to, in common parlance, eat with one's knife. The same thing may be said of dress: I quite remember, as a young one, sporting a white blanket top-coat, with pearl buttons larger than a crown-piece; an all but white grey mixture of Newmarket-cut coat, silver basket buttons; striped groom-like waistcoat, white cords, top-boots, and a light blue bird's-eye spot-silk tie; as morning costume, such dress really was then "the time o'day," the boot-tops not more than six inches deep—with the out-and-out fast man not so much, and a very light cream the colour: my father patronized the "mahoganies," for

which I, impudently enough, voted him the "Bristol blue," a notoriously slow coach of those days; nor did I leave him alone till he adopted the veritable creams: now, lo and behold! the mahoganies that have been held up to ridicule and detestation for the last five-and-thirty years, are quite "the time o'day," and I can easily imagine top-boots becoming again the morning dress of those who can lay "the flattering unction to their souls" of being riding men; the bootmakers will not object to it, but it will be martyrdom to the young gentlemen who introduce a new muslin to our wives' notice. An artistic spring over the counter in trousers is all very well; but the same thing done, exhibiting a pair of Mr. Bartley's artistically-made top-boots, might tend to a surmise that such feat was the only saltatory exploit they had ever played a part in.

Most persons have seen the old print representing "*Le primier baiser d'amour*," and have laughed at (to them) the grotesque costume of the idol of St. Pierre; this in (we will say) 1820, when waists were indicated by the shoulder-blades. We now hold the veritable waists of the days of Rousseau as the *acme* of elegance and good taste. My father's comfortable, quite straight-cut hunting-frock showed slow beside the Melton swallow-tail; but we shall see that swallow-tails, like swallows themselves, will only have their season; for

> "Fashion in everything bears sovereign sway,
> And swords and periwigs have each their day."

The advocate of the old sentry-box frock may ridicule among his friends the swallow-tails of the fast countries and fast men; he may say—Is that *thing* one to keep a man warm on a cold morning? or will it protect the knees of the wearer from rain? Certainly not, my

old bit of the right stuff; but in fast countries, what you call *morning* the fast men term the middle of the night.

The sun near its meridian is no bad substitute for half a yard of scarlet cloth; and at the pace hounds and horses now go, the air that velocity converts into opposing current soon converts the venerated straight-cut skirt into the swallow-tail, and then where is the vaunted protection it affords? *Chaque pays chaque mode*, quite holds good between a flying fox-hunting country with a flying lady-pack, and a closely-enclosed one with a cry of blue mottles, threading the mazes of a hare that perhaps never was four miles from the form from which she started. No intended affront to hare-hunters: they rank among the best of sportsmen; and the only way in which they show themselves as being too fast, is where they meddle with the doings or *habits* (cry ye mercy for the unintentional pun) of faster men.

"That's it, old Trueboy!" cries the master or huntsman of the old Southerons, as some trustworthy old hound throws his honest tongue like the tenor bell of a cathedral. "That's the time o'day!" cries the huntsman of the flying ladies, as Jessica hits it off on the other side of the Whissendine. Ten miles as the crow flies, which the swallow-tail flies in forty minutes, keeps up circulation, albeit the extra allowance of west-of-England goes for cuffs and collar for another Melton cut.

Did I see such dress, such men, and such horses when I was a boy? No, reader, I did not: I began my apprenticeship at seven years old, in a country where hounds were fast enough; but "heads up and tail down" only lasted across one ten-acre field, and then a

scramble to get into the next. I had not then learned that finding a fox at Panshanger with Lady Salisbury boded a far different thing to finding one in a Leicestershire gorse with the Quorn: in the former country, the careful jumper was the *ne plus ultra* of a hunter; there the foxhound had often to condescend to creep a fence; there horses and hounds taking these fences at a swing was all but unknown. 'Tis thy fair fields, O Leicestershire! that kindle the electric spark in the breast of the fox-hunter; thy hundred-acre pastures alone can show what real going is; not to have seen thee, is not to have lived—to feel we shall never see thee more, is but a living death!

"Was Leicestershire always as prominent, as a hunting country, as it shows at present?" asks some one who has never seen it. I should say that from its nature it must have been; for it is the country, far more than the speed of the hounds, that makes a fast thing; figuratively speaking, every pack of high-bred foxhounds are fast enough in a country that holds a scent, and where small enclosures do not impede them. A pack of highly-bred harriers, with a fox before them, would over Leicestershire give the thorough-breds a proof they must not console themselves with the prospect of a mere canter. That hounds in fast countries were not, threescore years ago, as fast as they now are, is no doubt the case; and where anything is come at by degrees, change creeps on imperceptibly; but I should be tempted to say the Quorn could and did go pretty nearly or quite as fast when Hugo Meynell had brought them to what he left them, as they do now.

It may be asked, "Why, if hounds do not go faster than they did in the days to which I allude, do men now find it necessary to ride race-horses, or all but such,

as hunters to keep their place?" I think I can answer this query. In those days, when hounds went off on good terms with their fox, and scent lay high, they ran away from the horses; now they do not: we do not now hear of a "Billesdon Coplow day," when "the headmost horseman rode alone." Hounds did get away from Meynell, "pioneers and all;" they did not from Clinker or Polecat, or, of later date, from "The Sea" or Sir John.

Some sixteen years ago, or a little more, when Lord Howth took to stag-hunting, I told his Lordship that his field would have to change their horses; for the class of Irish hunter then in use, I predicted, would not live with hounds, the stag as their game. I gave this opinion on fair grounds, namely, having had eight successive seasons with the (then) Kings in England. I mentioned the same to many excellent riders and sportsmen, with whom I had the advantage of being acquainted; they laughed at my prediction—they found, however, I was right. Lord Howth, riding mostly thorough-breds, sailed away on them, showing, though not saying, This is "the time o'day." The fact was, the hounds were as they were; but not having to stoop to a scent, and going over a flying country, little short of a race-horse could live with them. It is not so much the going, as the not stopping, that makes a run tell so severely on horses.

I verily believe that to this introduction of stag-hunting Ireland is more indebted than many think; it taught them jumping alone would not do: they found blood was wanting to enable them to go; for super-excellent as the Irish hares and harriers are, many who with them took the Lough of the bay as a matter of course, found either that it had grown wider, or their horses

jumped shorter, after a burst with a stag before them. They got better blood into the veins of their hunters and all their horses, and now as fine specimens of the race-horse come from Ireland as from any part of the globe.

There was a time, ere steam and railroads brought all countries together, when our Irish neighbours thought no one but an Irishman could ride, no horse but an Irish one could jump, and England showed no fences worthy the name of one; they have long since found their mistake—have found men here who could and do go, horses that can jump, and fences that have bothered their best hunters to get over. They now, with the liberality of feeling inherent in Irishmen, admit this, and join with us hand and heart in showing that England and Ireland possess, and I think we may say ever will possess, the finest breed of horses in the world, for beauty, speed, and stamina combined.

In further elucidation of the various occasions on which the heading of this article has been used as expressive of what may be conceived to be near perfection, I was, many years since, in the studio of that then prince of animal painters, Marshall; the subject of the late Lord Darlington hunting his own hounds was introduced. "Ay, that's the time o'day!" says Captain Treacher, who was then present. I, though then a very young man indeed, ventured to differ from the decided approbation of the Captain, and the same idea I held then keeps possession of my mind to this day. I quite agree in the maxim, that what is worth doing at all, is worth doing well; and certainly what a nobleman does should be well done. If he keeps foxhounds, they should be as near perfection as judgment, good taste, and money can make them; but to bring them to this,

it is not necessary, nor in fact becoming, that their noble owner should take the place of huntsman or dog-feeder: he who is the first should, so far as superintendence goes, be also the latter—an occupation I hold somewhat beneath the dignity of a nobleman; let him be as enthusiastic in the cause as he pleases, but he certainly need not make himself a functionary in the field or kennel. A nobleman should be a good judge of the merits and perfections of everything he professes to derive pleasure from; but if an undue proportion of that time he can so far more appropriately make use of in higher pursuits, is to be occupied in rendering himself efficient as huntsman and feeder, I think one possessing a mind, not only "above buttons," but above dogs, will agree that a nobleman hunting his own hounds, is an exhibition that, under ordinary circumstances, is more to be "honoured in the breach than the" performance. Can one suppose a greater anomaly than would have been the late Duke of Beaufort, with his high bearing and refined manners, forcing his way on foot through a wet tangled cover, too thick and intricate for a horse to traverse? Yet such must sometimes become the necessary duty of a huntsman; nor would the dignity of the nobleman be at all restored by afterwards standing by the feeding-troughs, inhaling odour not ambrosial, his valet wondering my Lord prefers it to the somewhat more refined atmosphere of his dressing-room. I cannot but think the Badminton do as well under the control of Long, as did the Raby under that of their former noble owner, and with such a master as was the Duke of Beaufort, I dare say Long thought so too.

If a man is poor, and undertakes the unenviable task (for a task it is) of managing a subscription pack, I in no shape consider *him* deserving censure by saving

the expense of a huntsman: a man may quite preserve the character and conduct of a gentleman though acting as huntsman; but if he is a man of large fortune, I must say I think his position is somewhat more imposing as master, instead of huntsman, of the pack. A private individual, if he is choice in his breed of terriers, may, *sub rosa*, go to see a favourite try his mettle in a rat-pit; but the public would be somewhat astonished to see the Prince Albert at such an exhibition. A nobleman must pay some penalty for the dignity he enjoys; and should any one consider the not hunting a pack of foxhounds as such, I must say I think the penalty should be exacted to the uttermost farthing.

It has latterly become quite "the time o'day" for gentlemen to ride steeple-chases. Speaking of their doing so, as an abstract act, even hypercriticism can find no fault; it is a manly and in no way an ungentlemanly one. But I must slightly hint that I do not think a nobleman quite as much in his place as he might be, if he rides as forming one of a field where avowed professionals are his competitors. I am not prejudiced turfman enough to wish to deny gentlemen or even noblemen riding races (of any sort if they ride well), and with each other it is a fair competition for superiority in horsemanship; and so far from (as mere betting men contend) "races to be ridden by gentlemen" rendering a meeting less interesting, I am quite sure it renders a provincial one popular. But I would hint to some early performers that I have seen, that a race-course is a place to *exhibit* not to *learn* the seat and hands of a jockey. I can make no more excuse for an awkward amateur performer in the pigskin on a course than for an equally incompetent one in the sock and buskin, ranting on the boards of a regular theatre; the in-

struction of Hamlet to the players should be a lesson to both, to prevent their exhibiting as "journeymen, and bad ones too."

It was "the time o'day" to have a four-in-hand in its *ensemble* as like a stage-coach as possible: nothing could show worse taste. Have it a perfectly driving-like turn-out as possible; but let it show as the one of Lord or Mr. Somebody's, and not that of Messrs. Costar and Co. Acknowledge a coachman if he had ever driven you, but not by the fraternal up-turn of the whip-wrist, and side-shake of the head, as Black Will on the up-Oxford would acknowledge Bill Williams on the down-Reading. We will only suppose it possible that such things have been as a nobleman taking the finishing draught from a pot of heavy on his box, and in true artistic style throwing the dregs aside; yet once I saw a young honourable do this, and crown the act by saying to a servant, "Hand over the browns, Bill." This might have been "the time o'day," but certes not "the time of taste"—at least, not of a good one.

One morning, at breakfast, close to the end of February, I read in the *Times* the appointment of Lord Eglinton as representative of Royalty in Ireland; I could not help indulging in a wee bit of slang on the announcement, and exclaimed to my wife, giving an energetic slap to my knee, "That's the time o'day!" A twelve years' residence in Ireland, and consequently a tolerably intimate knowledge of the Irish character, led to the exclamation; for well I knew a heart big enough to cause princely expenditure, and bold enough to show the way in "the foremost flight," would be a sure passport to the warm and energetic one of the sons of the ever-green isle. Many such hearts we boast—many

of such are now ready and preparing to show their daring spirits in other fields than those of Dian. Let us hope that many of those who have so triumphantly crossed Whissendine, will as triumphantly and unscathed cross the Danube, should it become necessary.

HOUNDS.

"Hounds of their various sort, and no less various use."

What was the origin of the term hound I never heard; others may have done so, but I never have been informed of the derivation of the epithet. If intended to specify a dog used in the pursuit of game in general terms, why not apply it to all used for such purpose? the pointer and setter would then be distinguished as partridge or grouse hounds. It was not meant to specify dogs hunting by scent; for we originally spoke of the gaze, now grey-hound. We can only, therefore, conclude it to be a word that, like many others, has come into general use, why or wherefore we know not. It is by no means a perfect or specific appellation, because we are obliged to make use of an antecedent ere we can clearly specify the particular kind of hound we allude to.

In specifying and attempting to accurately describe different sorts of hounds of chase, it will be absolutely necessary to first mention the staghound, not out of any peculiar respect for him or his pursuit, but that in point of antiquity he takes precedence of the foxhound, or of the various kinds of hound that are in use to hunt hares; in fact, without we had first had the staghound, our present race of the foxhound would not have ex-

isted; and it would sound no little discordant in the ears of my brother fox-hunters, should I say—and fact only induces me to write the truth—the foxhound we so glory in is, as regards his family and ancestry, a mongrel.

I must, I fear, anticipate no trifling expression of indignation from fox-hunters on reading a word so repugnant to the ideas of the sportsman, and the more so when applied to an animal his beau-ideal of perfection in the race of dogs. I trust, however, he will suspend his denouncement of me till I have brought forward such reasons as I consider, or at least hope, will justify me in the unusual remark—in fact, assertion—that I have made.

Although we may feel quite certain the staghound existed long before any other modern sporting dog in use, we must not (or, at all events, it would be quite useless) to say anything about his native (or rather original) country. A few centuries ago no such animal as our present staghound was known in any country. We talk about the old English bloodhound: this would seem to infer that the bloodhound is an indigenous animal of our country: this is by no means certain; nor, from what I have read, do I believe it to be the case. I should rather say, his original country was Spain; but whether this be correct or not, it is quite certain he was known there long before he was so here. That he was the dog chiefly used in former days as the chief hound of chase, I should very much doubt; for, judging by very old pictures, the dogs represented there are far more of the greyhound breed than that of the slow, but sure-scenting animal, such as the bloodhound Talbot, or, indeed, any dog that trusted to his nose more than his speed; and this most likely was the case; for

in times when to get the haunch for table was the chief incentive, and a run from Slough or Maidenhead thicket to Hendon was an exploit, on the part of deer, hounds, horses, or men, unknown and unwished for, it is probable such practice was adopted as appeared (or probably really was) the quickest mode of securing the game pursued. To this end, if pictorial representations are correct—independent of archers, who aimed at, wounded, or killed the game as it passed any open space, at such openings men were placed, who each held a couple of dogs in leash, ready to let slip at the proper moment; these probably, like our greyhounds, either pulled down the game while it remained in sight, or, if they failed, were again coupled, to be let slip on the next occasion—probably the bloodhound or Talbot was employed in driving the game from the thickest parts of the woods or forests; but it is quite clear these were not trusted or considered to be alone the agents by which the game was to be secured.

In after-years, when hunting became a pastime as well as pursuit, and the country became more peopled, these thick forests were more or less cleared and curtailed; this led to game being easily forced through, and indeed from cover, and as in such cases it took across the open country, archers on foot became useless; the hunters all took horse, and, as it seems, they found the bloodhound too slow to run up to game in any reasonable time. So they found it would not do to trust to hounds that ran by sight only; an increased speed, with scenting powers, became necessary in their dogs of chase; to effect this, it is quite probable they crossed the bloodhound with the strong kind of gazehound then in use, and from that cross descended the staghound in use in the last century.

So far as I can ascertain the fact, there were originally three distinct colours, distinguishing the different race of bloodhounds, and probably the different countries to which they belonged. There was the direct black and tan; the dark brown, with darker markings on the muzzle, down the back, and in other parts; and there was a breed of entire fawn colour: from the latter, I conclude, the staghound in use in the last century was descended, as those hounds were to a dog all fawn, or, as it is sometimes called, lemon and white pied. Such were the pack in use with his late Majesty George the Third. These hounds were of great size; their tone deep, like that of their ancestors, the bloodhound; and their speed far greater than might have been supposed; but, like the game they pursued, let the pace be what it might, they never appeared to be going fast. It is the same with the stag, he always appears to be taking the thing leisurely, even with the hounds close to his haunches; at least, this much I can say, that during seven consecutive seasons that I hunted with staghounds, I never saw a hunting deer so exert himself as to give the impression that he was at the top of his speed. If we see a hare closely pursued, there is an increased and energetic jerk with her hind legs, that at once shows the great speed and exertion she is making use of. If a fox is unexpectedly run up to, while he has any increased exertion in him, he lays his ears in his poll, and his legs to the ground, in unmistakeable evidence of being at his best speed; but in the deer (that is, the large red deer) I never could perceive any corresponding increased speed or exertion: whether out of hearing of hounds, or with them close on him, he strides along with a cool, collected, even stroke; the only perceptible difference I could ever perceive in this was a more lengthened stride,

and a somewhat quickened stroke. We all know that the smaller the animal, the quicker appear—nay, indeed are—its motions. I believe that, as regards comparative size, small animals are more speedy than large ones; still we are much deceived in this respect. The mouse appears quick as thought in its motions—so it is; but in an open space, a man can far outwalk its utmost speed; this might account for why a large animal like the stag appears to be always going at his leisure. But we must bring against this the race-horse: in him we do see, at different times, very apparent difference of speed and exertion; and he, when near the ending-post, shows at once that he is at the top of his speed—a manifestation we never see in the stag.

It is just the same with the hounds that followed him at the period I have alluded to; they went with the same measured stride as the stag they pursued, and from this no excitement stimulated them. What would have been the maximum speed of a staghound, if tried, it is impossible to say, as I believe the experiment never was made; but, under any circumstances, I should say it would have been found greatly inferior to that of the foxhound, the greatest proof of which is, that after Majesty no longer honoured the royal chase by its presence, and the taste and wishes of gentlemen who hunted with the Royal Pack could be consulted, the old deep-flewed, pendant-eared, yellow and white-pied hound was at once put aside, and the regular foxhound introduced to his new vocation of hunting the stag. The consequence of this has been, that stag-hunting has become a chase, short, sharp, and decisive. We hear no more of "takes," twenty miles or more from the turnout; and, in my humble opinion, a great change this for the better. I dislike a journey on horseback under

most circumstances, but a journey with hounds is sad work indeed.

The very horses used in these days in the royal hunting establishment at once show the different pace the hounds now go, to what they did fifty years ago: those used in such times were a good wear-and-tear sort, that did not mind one of the hunting journeys (then of frequent recurrence), provided the pace was not too great; but now Davis finds the Traverser not a bit too fast for his hounds. A somewhat delicate Newmarket gentleman this said flyer, that one of the old sort would wear out in a month, if equally worked; but then, on one of those enduring ones, if the turn-out was the race-course, the hounds would be at Swallowfield ere their huntsman had passed Swinly Lodge enclosure. "Calf-hunting," as fox-hunters jocosely, I must not say derisively, call stag-hunting, has now lost many of those features that formerly subjected it to such unsporting appellation. The pace equals fox-hunting; there it is no stopping hounds to accommodate royal convenience or prescribed etiquette: so far, therefore, as the actual chase goes, it is as exciting as any other for those whose object is riding, and a certain gallop. "But," says a brother fox-hunter, "there is something so tame in turning out an animal merely to catch it again." I quite agree with my friend, and I think this destroys all the zest of the thing; but we must not forget that, in fox-hunting, there is occasionally such a thing as a bagman.

Now for the "mongrel" I have spoken of.

"What's in a name? a rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

As sweet as a foxhound! some one may ironically re-

mark. In making the quotation, good critic, I did not mean it to bear on sweetness, or its reverse, but on the little importance of epithets; but I will meet you on the score of what may affect the olfactories. A foxhound, I admit, is anything but sweet, if kept in an improper state; but with all deference to superior man, I maintain that a foxhound, kept in proper (that is, perfect) cleanliness, and in a well-ventilated habitation, is no more objectionable as regards his person than many animals we sometimes meet with, ranking higher in usual estimation; in fact, I should say, far less so than would be the person whose inattention to cleanliness might cause objection to be made to his proximity to the hounds.

I believe any animal whose origin is not confined to a particular and distinct species, but on the contrary, is the offspring of two different breeds, is literally a mongrel; it matters not if one parent was the highest-bred greyhound that ever won at Amesbury and Newmarket, the other the best pointer that ever gun shot over, a direct mongrel the produce would be. That no such animal as the foxhound formerly existed as a species of the dog is, I believe, an indisputable fact; he has, therefore, arisen from an admixture of breed of some sort; that the bloodhound was on one side the founder of the foxhound there can be little doubt, but of what strain the other parent was is left in obscurity; it might be surmised that the foxhound was still the bloodhound degenerated in point of size; but this would not have altered the general appearance and characteristics of the animal. To effectually get rid of the enormous ears, large head, loose loins, over-hanging upper lip, dewlap and general throaty appearance of the bloodhound, a cross with a lighter and cleaner-bred dog must have been made use

of, probably the terrier (call him what they might in former days); for before fox-hunting was carried on as it has been for the last hundred and fifty years, foxes used to be destroyed in their earths as vermin, and for this purpose a dog was used, no doubt the prototype of our terrier. Of pointers, setters, or spaniels, we know little, or rather hear nothing of in ancient records, so we will not admit them as forming any collateral branch of the foxhound family. The shepherd's dog, no doubt, existed; but the bob or no-tailed animal we have, or the small bush-tailed Scotch dog, are both so totally unlike the foxhound, that we must equally reject them as the relatives of foxhounds.

It is admitted by all naturalists, that no animal indigenous to this country is seen in such variety of form as is the dog; this, of course, arises from the spontaneous crosses that take place; but these circumstances only occur among dogs of common breed, the purity of whose blood is a matter of no importance to any one. But dogs of value are so scrupulously watched at particular periods, that having got our breeds of sporting dogs perhaps as near perfection as they can be, there is no fear of our permitting them to degenerate while kept in this their own country; yet, whatever pains may be taken, no means have as yet been found to prevent sporting dogs losing *caste*, in every particular, shortly after their arrival in foreign ones: this, I believe, is found to be more the case with hounds than with pointers, setters, or dogs of any kind used in the pursuit of winged game; at all events, I know it is so with foxhounds. Whether, after a generation or two bred in such countries, a pack might not be kept up as with us, if in a climate similar to ours, I am not prepared to say; but hounds taken from here degenerating so much, and so shortly, seems

to more than indicate they were not in point of ancestry originally of foreign extraction.

There is one peculiarity in the foxhound that does not exist in any other dog that I know of. I never saw (what in dog language is termed) "a whole coloured one;" nor have I ever heard of an entire black, brown, liver-coloured, fawn, red, or mouse-coloured foxhound. All but white I have seen, the same with black-and-tan, also brown; but still there was with the white some slight mark of colour in some part, and in the others the feet, legs, or throat, more or less showed white. This is not the case with pointer, setter, spaniel, greyhound, or the original bloodhound or Talbot—thus, I consider, showing the foxhund to be of mixed breed.

In point of action, in his canter or when running hard, he stands alone: perhaps the greyhound is the most similar to him in this particular; there is a beautiful race-horse-like stride with the foxhound shown by no other dog living, the greyhound excepted. The setter sweeps over the ground very handsomely; but there is a dwell in his action in no way indicative of the speed of the foxhound, nor does he possess it. Many pointers go in good style, but there is a hurry in their movement not racing-like: there is a certain determination even in the canter of the former that the others in no shape evince. With every respect for the pointer, when a good one, his general demeanour is currish when seen by the side of the dog of all dogs. There is a kind of gravity, an apparent air of conscious superiority and importance in all the demeanour of the foxhound, that no other dog exhibits. The Newfoundland and the bloodhound are each soberly enough conducted in their manner and habits; but then, where is the dash of the foxhound, that we can see even in his quietest moments

and movements he shows ready to exhibit, the moment proper occasion rouses him.

In point of gameness and high courage the foxhound yields to no animal of his species; he does not show it by the ferocity of the bulldog, who will seize any inoffensive animal if set on; neither has he the same peculiarity of endurance under absolute torture as has the other. His high spirit, when compared with the bulldog's, is like that of the soldier compared with the prize-fighter: no fatigue, no surmountable impediment, can stop his career in pursuit of his game; and though not classed among fighting dogs, if he begins he will fight desperately; many will not tamely submit to correction even from those they know; and unless a stranger was very well versed in dog language, with a voice and manner to awe hounds, on entering a kennel alone, he would find, perhaps at the cost of his life, that foxhounds can be even ferocious at times, or if unusual liberties are taken with them; in fact, I strongly suspect that if a man was strongly scented with fox odour, and hounds got on his drag I must, I suppose, call it), if they ran into him they would pull him down; and if they did while their blood was up, they would certainly kill, and, if unchecked, eat him.

In speed, either the greyhound or lurcher have a decided advantage over the hound; but how it would be in a five-mile run is, I believe, unknown, never having been tried; nor could it be, for we can invent no excitement to induce the greyhound to exert himself for so long a distance. But the speed a foxhound can, or rather has been induced to exhibit, was shown by Merkin running a drag over the Beacon course at Newmarket (if my memory is correct) seven minutes and one, two, or three seconds.—I think (claiming the like reservation

as to memory) about the same time as was occupied by Violante and Bramworm: be it remembered Merkin ran a drag. Could a fox have been kept in her view, I think it fair to conclude this greater excitement would have made her do it in still less time. The same course was also done by Mr. Barry's couple of hounds in a few seconds over eight minutes—a great falling off certainly from the astonishing feat of Merkin's. Still, this was fair racing time: I think something over that of Hambletonian and Diamond in their match. It is quite probable, had time been the object in this match, either horse could have done the distance in less; but, in justice to the hounds, we must recollect the pace mentioned is only the pace they *went*, which in no way proves that it was the greatest they *could* have exhibited.

The average height of foxhounds, taking the packs of the United Kingdom throughout, I think I may set down as twenty-three inches, dogs; twenty-one, bitches; or perhaps a shade under that. I should say the height I have mentioned is for most countries pretty near what would be found the most useful. The largest true-bred foxhound I ever saw measured twenty-eight inches: he looked a giant.

Colour is a matter of taste; and that which any master of foxhounds prefers will usually predominate. If I may be permitted to mention my own predilection, it certainly is a good share of black markings relieved with tan. I cannot but fancy them generally a determined high-couraged killing sort. The fawn or lemon-pied strike me as looking like staghounds, and, like a yellow chestnut horse, carry a soft look with them. The brown-pied, with lighter brown shaded off, is a good colour; but I fancy a little pointer-looking, and, I must hold, small round markings no little in the same way; but, if

the shape, make, and indications of speed and endurance are right, the colour must be very objectionable indeed, or the master over-fastidious, if a hound is rejected for colour only. I must, however, mention a hound I once saw, whom I really would have objected to from colour only: he was black, with the exception of white half-way up his fore-legs, and up to his thighs behind, and his face entirely white before the ears; he was, in short, marked like the bald-faced horses we often see in a cart: he was, notwithstanding, a choice favourite.

Without, however, being prejudiced by admiration of the foxhound, I think we may fairly say that, taking his perfect shape, style of going, speed, endurance, and courage altogether, we may rank him at the very head of all the canine species.

We now come to the harrier and beagle—terms (most improperly) indiscriminately used to designate any pack of hounds that hunt hares. It is true, they are all hare-hunting dogs; but by no means all harriers or all beagles, for there are packs of harehounds that differ as much in look, size, shape, and attributes, as does the cocker differ from the terrier: all these will own a scent, and run in pursuit of game; but hunting a hare does not make a dog a harrier. Though we technically say we are going-out with the harriers, it is immediately understood that the game will be the hare: what the dog may be is quite another matter.

There are two descriptions of persons who keep hare-hounds, or constantly follow them: these two have diametrically opposite tastes as regards hare-hunting. The true and legitimate hare-hunter must, to be satisfied, see a hare followed in all her doubles, and would as soon think of "lifting" his hounds as he would the horse he rides. Provided the hare is hunted every yard

of ground she runs over, he cares little how long the chase may last; in fact, with him the longer the chase the longer the pleasures of it last: he makes it, in fact, the very reverse of the fox-chase.

There is another class of hare-hunters who make their chase as much like fox-hunting as the nature and habits of the game pursued will admit. I fear I should be of the latter class, if only harehounds could be got at. I look with no disrespect on the direct hare-hunter—quite the reverse; and admit that, so far as the pleasure of hunting is confined to admiration of the working of the pack only, the hare-hunter enjoys the chase in its greatest perfection; but I am free to confess that I, like numbers of my brother fox-hunters, should not be content with this only, without some other attendant stimuli that we find in crossing country at first-rate pace. Perhaps, to avoid the criticism of more orthodox sportsmen, we may as well not specify what these stimuli are.

Such opposite tastes must, of course, require different means whereby to gratify them. Those means chiefly consist in the hounds employed for the purpose, which must differ as much in their qualifications as do the different duties required of them. The close line-hunting southern hound, or true old-fashioned beagle, would want speed to please the fast man; while the dash of the dwarf fox-hound would electrify, indeed disgust the lover of saddle-flap ears and veritable dewlaps. Each kills his hare, but quite in a different way. The latter would hunt her through all her intricate doubles with most admirable patience, astonishing instinct, and all but certain success. The first could not, indeed would not, have patience to do this; but his superior speed renders it unnecessary that he should: he drives Madam Puss at a pace that prevents her having time for all the circumbendibuses

she puts in practice before the slow hounds, with whom she practises very extraordinary vagaries that the speedy hounds put an end to very quickly; and she finds that fly she must, or die if she lingers. True hare-hunters may say, this is not giving the fair exercise of the cunning Nature has given her for her safety. Do we leave earths open to the fox for his? We give him the chance of beating the hounds, if he can, by his speed, stoutness, and any device they give him time to make use of: he gets no further favour than this. It may be said the fox is stouter than the hare. No doubt he is; but against this the hare has greater speed, and possesses a very great natural advantage in not leaving so strong a scent; and, moreover, reversing the case of the fox, as he tires, and then would want a turn in his favour, unluckily for him, the turn is against him, for the nearer his death the stronger is his scent; whereas, with the hare, when she is nearly beat she scarcely leaves any scent; and, again, if we inflict on her contention with even the dwarf foxhound, we take away the greater and finer sensibility of scent possessed by the southern hound or true-bred slow harrier, against whose persevering patience and keen nose she stands even less chance of escape, if in a country much enclosed. On downs, I grant we diminish that chance by hunting her with fast hounds; but in such a locality the old slow hounds would never catch, unless they run her from Brighton to Horsham, and wear her out by the day's journey.

That the southern hound and the beagle are both derived from the old Talbot, I think cannot admit of a doubt; for they are, both in shape and general features, and many in colour, Talbots in miniature. How their diminished size was brought about is somewhat mys-

terious, unless it arose from breeding "in-and-in;" for had it arisen from any cross, the leading features of the original stock would, as is the case with the foxhound, have been softened down. Even the Lilliputian lap-dog beagle is still a little Talbot: and a very handsome, or rather pretty animal it is; and, in comparison to its size, its speed is extraordinary—certainly faster than the old larger southern hound. I must here give an anecdote of one of these sturdy old-fashioned fogies:

I was out with a pack of them that I never saw before or since. While trying, I remarked a whole-coloured black-and-tan hound remarkably busy. I made an observation to the farmer, who acted as huntsman, relative to this hound. "Ay," says he, "it's ten to one but he finds a hare for us; he always does." And sure enough he did, and put her up not three yards from him. I, of course, expected to see him make a rush forward. Not he: he stood stock still, and gave a yow-yow that might have been heard half-a-mile. The pack all came up to him, and away they went. I observed my friend, the black-and-tan, just keep with them; but without in any way interesting himself in the chase, as if he thought it was not in his vocation. The first check that occurred, the pack made their cast; my friend stood perfectly still till they came back to him: each hound feathered about for some time, the black-and-tan still preserving his cool imperturbability. At last, as if he meant to say—"Now you have done your best, I will try what can be done;" he set to work. Though sitting on my horse, I clearly heard, when he was near me, the working of his expansive nostrils in snuffing for a scent. At last he stood still as before; and giving his sonorous yow-yow, the pack owned the well-known omen, "hit it off," and

ran into their game; my imperturbable friend leaving them the honour of the kill.

The ordinary harrier is clearly related to the foxhound. I should say, perhaps, as an intermediate sort between the southern and the flying dwarf foxhound, he is the best for the common run of countries, and for the amusement of the generality of those hunting with harehounds.

But stag, fox, or hare-hunter, choose what game you will, or what description of hound you may, if my good wishes could avail, your chase through life should ever be a joyous one; nor should your prospect be ever marred by "drawing blank."

HUNTERS AND HUNTING MEN.

In using the term "Hunters," the sportsman will naturally conclude that I allude only to the horses that carry us. It is not, however, quite thus; for before I say anything relative to the quadruped, I have a word or two to say about the biped hunter.

Now speaking of a man as a hunter, no more conveys the same ideas to the man of the present half-century, of a hunting man, than does using the term "waggoner" carry our thoughts to the *once* artists that tooled the Quicksilver, Berkley Hunt, Manchester Express, Brighton Age or Pearl; though those "lights of other days" were frequently in road language mentioned as first-rate *waggoners*. It is quite true the rail is beyond comparison faster than the "Wonders" of such times, even over their best bit of five-mile ground, where a team of four all but thorough-breds, half cripples, who could go in no other way but a gallop, went a pace that would not have been thought bad over the flat at Newmarket; and the momentum of the coach once got in full swing, they had little more to do than to keep out of its way. Everything is more or less (a something) by comparison; so the next stage out of Hounslow, that I have so often driven over with perfect delight, when the old uns had got settled a bit to their collars, began to find their legs, and only wanted holding together, was slow to the ordi-

nary working of the iron-way. So far, my still-cherished conveyance is beat; but if our coaches were slower than our steamers, let me tell the rising generation that the men of those days were a good deal "*faster*" than are the majority of those of the present one; for the man is not made in technical terms "fast," because the tender that draws him is. It is true, it may sound "fast," if, with an affected yawn, a young gentleman raises himself on the well-stuffed cushion of a first-class carriage, and lisps his opinion that "we are going confounded slow," when thirty miles an hour is the speed. I must, however, tell the gentleman that, though the train is actually fast, he is determinedly slow, when compared to men I have seen—a very slow coach indeed, if he could be placed by their side. He may drive his mamma in her Croydon basket; ay, or her George the Fourth's phaeton; we will admit he may manage a pair; but perhaps some reader may remember the time when *the* —he was indeed not merely *a* Marquis of Worcester, could lay hold of four of the greatest rogues that ever revelled in the name of bokickers, and in a mile bring them together as if no one of them had ever dreamed of a bit of mischief in his life; and this done by a nobleman whose courtly demeanour challenged admiration where all was courtly, respect from all who came within his sphere of action, and regard and gratitude from thousands whose misfortunes had awakened the sympathies of his noble mind, and ever kind and benevolent heart.

I believe we may truly say, that the inhabitants of every nation are more or less hunters, but differing widely as to their incentives to be so, and as widely in the sort of game they pursue. It may be objected, that the man who merely takes an animal in a trap or pitfall

can scarcely be termed a hunter. As regards our ideas of hunting, he certainly could not be so termed; but though he may not, as we do, hunt the animal when found, he hunts or seeks to find him; so he is most indubitably in his own person a hunter; and if we may judge of enthusiasm by the danger, difficulty, or deprivation encountered, the chamois hunter encounters more danger in his single person in one week, than does a combined field of Leicestershire sportsmen in a whole season. The beaver-trapper undergoes difficulty and privation, in his lonely and solitary pursuit, that would not be endured by the fox-hunter to see the gamest fox killed that ever faced the picked part of Leicestershire. No doubt the Alpine hunter and the New World trapper encounter what they do as a mode of livelihood; but as in each country there are other modes by which a living may be, and is obtained, it shews each prefers hardships as a hunter, to more ease and less danger in labouring in other pursuits. Those who have conversed with many hunters of the two descriptions quoted, assure me that the chamois-hunter speaks of the thrilling ardour of his chase with the most intense enthusiasm, and the trapper hails with delight the season that sends him a solitary wanderer in the endless forests, where no human voice responds to his own. Could we but instil a little of his patience and silence into our collected "Field," till their game was fairly "tally-ho'd away," what a blessing it would be! then we would freely admit them all the enthusiasm the most enthusiastic chamois-hunter could feel and shew.

"But if thy proud, aspiring soul, disdains so mean a prize," there is the bristly pard, the far more dangerous tiger, the tawny lion, or the gigantic elephant, whose bare tread would crush his pursuer, as that pursuer does

the worm he treads on; and "a walk over," where this giant is the actor, would not be quite so satisfactory as a walk over the T.M.M. or Ditch-in at Newmarket.

Thousands think pork a delicacy; few object to a really good sausage as a relish at breakfast, and with great *goût* we discuss them, when Piggy has been killed to our hand, and the sausages brought to our table; but when we have to chase him, at the risk of his making sausage-meat of us, a *modus operandi* to which I am told he is somewhat prone, he would appear to our unpractised eye a far different animal to the Chinese, whose little eyes twinkle at us through the fat that encompasses them, as he complacently grunts in his pen at a cattle show.

Thousands, again, are partial to shell-fish; so am I, and probably my reader; but *est modus in rebus.* Now I have heard of men who jump on the backs of crocodiles, clap a stick between their jaws, and quietly guide them to the banks of "reedy Nile;" a kind of snaffle-bridle nag, I must say, I should not be anxious to mount, nor would my predilection for shell-fish quite induce me to make the attempt. If, as it is said, the Nile has its source in the Mountains of the Moon, probably these crocodile riders originated in the same place; so this accounts for their somewhat singular exploits.

We read of Nimrod, and other "mighty hunters" of old; then come, in more modern phrase, sundry monarchs "devoted to the chase," some of them a royal true old English set, whose last representative ceased when, whatever his failings or afflictions may have been, that truly English monarch, George the Third, ceased to exist; and, be it borne in mind, that if that monarch was not so great an encourager of the arts that may embellish a country, as was his more elegant and more accomplished

son, he most liberally encouraged all things whose really beneficial effects to the country were not so doubtful as is much that has been so lavishly encouraged since—that such line of conduct was appreciated and approved by the nation over which he reigned, be it remarked, that the name of George the Third is never mentioned but as being of "revered" or "respected memory," the highest tribute of regard and respect a nation can pay to departed royalty. It may be asked, did so common-place a measure as joining in the chase produce a national feeling of attachment to the royal person? Certainly not; that is not the act alone, but it shewed a bias of mind towards things in general, the love of which is inherent, natural, and indivisible from the feelings and predilections of Englishmen. Splendid festivities, where Majesty is scarce seen, or if seen, only surrounded by next to equals, may excite an evanescent admiration, its intents may be hypothetically held as laudable; its effects to certain classes may be beneficial, and among such classes produce a certain (possibly) fleeting popularity; but a monarch fearlessly riding home from hunting, accompanied only by his grooms or an attendant nobleman, produced in the mind, and often to the voice, a homely but hearty "God bless your Majesty!" that shewed when an escort accompanied its monarch, it only appeared as an appendage usual, but not necessary to royalty.

We read of a country being devastated, by its villages being destroyed for miles round, to form an uninterrupted area on which a king might hunt. Such accusation comes before us in very questionable form. That a nest of poachers, who devastated a forest of its game, and rendered its precincts dangerous to the traveller, may have in such times been rooted out, is more than pro-

bable and more than justifiable; but as now, when hunting is in its glory, we do not find a village any drawback on a hunting country, why, when the country was far less populous than it is now, should a village have been objectionable? If, indeed, a monarch so conducted himself as to fear an arrow or a bullet from behind each bush, he might, from such fear, depopulate the scene of his amusement. If such was the case, it becomes a matter of surprise that extirpation did not take another, a readier, and far more reasonable direction.

After the original era, when "devoted to the chase" was the term used, came in the shorter one of "sportsman;" these were about the days when Goldsmith figuratively describes "every rood of ground maintained its man." Whether this was the case or not, in those times, figuratively speaking, every farmer maintained his hound, and these were clubbed on hunting days; of these, no doubt some were most comfortably slow, but then neighbour Giles's two couple were as decidedly fast: Farmer Blackthorn had a couple of most roguish skirters; but his old bitch Madam was a trusty old line hunter, who stuck as perseveringly to the trail, as females usually do to anything they determine on. Young Sheepshear's two couple of ladies were a little apt sometimes to throw their tongues somewhat freely—other ladies sometimes do the same—but then there were some couples who ran perfectly mute: wise dogs they were; for when hidden from sight, no one knew what they were at, possibly getting a bit of "currant jelly" to themselves, of which sometimes a rather full-looking paunch caused suspicion; but they wisely kept their own counsel, which we must not anticipate was the case with a field where there were so many masters; such packs did not quite run as did George the Third's harriers, when Davis hunted them,

or rather, when he had them so perfect, that a turn of his horse would turn them. What matter? hunting is but amusement after all; and be it well or ill done, if those out are pleased, it is all that can be desired. Now the pack by contribution really possessed several advantages His Majesty's did not; for instance—

There is considerable difference of taste among different sportsmen as regards hounds; some like them very large, some prefer small; again, some patronise the most useful general sort, that is of medium size; many men are great martinets in the field as respects hounds being unerringly steady; others prefer a little more "dash and fling" among them; some men will have speed at any cost; others are not so particular in this respect, but will have hounds hunt every inch in the coldest scent. Now the King's, I hold, taking all their attributes together, were faultless; but if a man wanted some particular quality in a pack, at the expense of other things, he would probably have wished this pack a little more (something) than they were, for merit does not always command approval from all persons. But with our scratch-pack it was otherwise: each party that was out was sure to be pleased with some of them; those who liked to go fast, would find two or three couple quite ready to accommodate them; the soberer sort would have a few couple of the regular "yow-yow" sort, who would "tie upon a scent," and in place of demonstrating the velocity of sound, would fill the same spot with harmony by the hour together. Then for those who did not like straight going, a couple or two of skirters formed a nice little chosen pack for the special enjoyment of those who thought the longest way round was sometimes the nearest or safest way to go. But again, there are other advantages to be enjoyed in hunt-

ing with an *omnium gatherum* pack. It is all very well to talk of a table-cloth covering a pack in chase. I admit that, among others, I am one to greatly admire such concentration of act and attribute, but the scratch-pack man might say, I don't quite like trusting to such concentration, for suppose an error should occur, or scent be over-run, the whole pack are stopped as dead as is a steam-boat, when the "Stop her!" is called by the boy who takes his cue from the signalling hand of the captain. Now with our infallible scratch-pack it is widely different: if the leading fast ones have been too fast, and consequently are compelled to throw up their heads, the sober ones bring on the chase to its true point; the Brilliants wait for them, or perchance have to hark back to them; then, confident in the unerring decision of their less volatile companions, with unblushing effrontery join in the chorus—a type of the *éclât* awarded to many a member of the Cabinet, many a military commander in the field, where the working ones are graciously permitted to work, that the influential may enjoy the credit and emolument: verily a Scratch-pack Ministry often are. There is, however, one very distinguishing feature between a scratch-pack of hounds, and one of Ministers: the first are expected to please their huntsman and the whole field; if the latter please their huntsman and do all he wishes, and he all his employer wishes, the field is permitted to be pleased or displeased, as it thinks proper. What business has a field to think at all? Refinement in our venatic pursuits has caused a great reformation in scratch-packs of hounds. Reformation in the biped pack has been long talked of; it is, however, only promised, as is a fixture in a long frost, "weather permitting."

As established packs of hounds under one master

increased in number, scratch-packs diminished, for various reasons; these were, of course, merely harriers, and having the liberty of the farm-yard and adjacent meadows, they often took the further liberty of any near cover, thus greatly disturbing foxes; and the farmers finding that, if good sportsmen, they were welcomed in the field by their landlords and the master of the hounds, they took their day with the foxhounds when convenient to them. They now, however, found that Dobbin, who carried the farmer or his wife as each might want him, could not make a fight of it with foxhounds, even in those days; nor did the well-worn dark corduroys and leggings look seemly by the cover side. It is quite true that in those times the boots of the 'squire acknowledged no higher polish on the lower part than oil and lamp-black mixed afforded; the tops got washed, and when dry, a little milk sponged over them was a bit of dandyism practised by those who were particular. But the accomplished artist who first found out that white of egg produced an undeniable polish, I have heard my father say (for the servant was his), sold his receipt to other servants for miles round.

Tops were in those days held to be at their highest beauty when, like the meerschaum, they exhibited a deep brown. Pumice-stone was comparatively quite a new application to leather breeches; for prior to this, rubbing off actual mud or splashes was the only attempt to clean them; they consequently shortly became striped, like the skin of a zebra, and were only thought at their best when a universal brown gave them a uniform colour. Yet I have been told these, with a pair of shoes and silk stockings, were no unusual dinner-dress for the good 'squires of old. These were the days when a good dewlap was not held unsightly in a foxhound, and a

kind of Talbot head, with a capacious pair of jaws, and a throat that gave the idea of swallowing a fox whole, was rather held desirable than otherwise. Even so late as the celebrated Jack Raven's time, report says, that on the master objecting to a hound on account of a large head, Jack's excuse for it was, "It has a great deal of sense in it."

This was, I think it may certainly be said, the age of sportsmen, but certainly not of riders; for I remember perfectly well, when as a boy nine years of age, and in my boyish second season's fox-hunting, being with my father on a visit to a relative in Northamptonshire, we were shown the leap said to be the celebrated one taken by Dick Knight. My relative addressing me, said—"What do you think of that, young un?" "Why," said I, "I would ride the chesnut mare over it now if she was here." That hunters (I mean horses) were more accomplished (if I may use the term), or I will say, perfect fencers then, than we have them now, I verily believe; they had not the same energy in them as highly-bred horses have; they were allowed to take their fences more leisurely; and to find footing on a rotten or razor-backed bank, required no little judgment and practice in the animal. Could one of our forefathers have been put on the back of Moonraker, Grimaldi, Paulina, or Lottery, in one of their swings, the good man would have thought he never should alight on the earth again.

In such days, if a man kept a couple of hunters for his own riding, it was considered as many as he could possibly really require; the keeping of three was held as a little useless extravagance that affectation or a peculiar turn alone occasioned. Three feeds of corn a day, and, in their technical term, a "handful of beans," were a hunter's allowance. Hay, we may consider, was given

nearly without stint; for in their groom's phrase, a horse having "something to kick against," or looking like "carrying his dinner with him," was a high recommendation. I suppose they went upon the same principle as had done a horsekeeper I once took in my employ: I insisted that each horse's rack should be cleared out three hours before he was put to the coach. "Lord, sir!" says the fellow, "I always likes 'em to have something to start with; it carries over the stage."

There ever was, and ever will be, first, second, and minor-rate grooms in all ages; first-rate ones, when horses having "a good bread-basket" was in vogue, made it a point, when a horse with a coat like a Siberian goat or sheep came in, "never to leave him till he was as dry as a bone;" so a tired horse was thump-thumped by a succession of whisps by a man on each side, till his return home was made a penalty to him.

These were days when Bass's bitter ale was unknown, and would not have been liked if it had been. Malt and hops were then the leading ingredients in ale, and each farmer brewed and drank his own; the good wife made her cask of gooseberry or currant "wind."

"All very well for the women," as her good man would deridingly but good-naturedly remark. Farmers had not began a beverage "that nobody knows how it's made in they foreign parts." The 'squire stuck to good old port, and would as soon have drunk the waters of Rhine as the wine that came from its country: "Rot-gut stuff; very well for a foreigner;" forgetful that the wine he patronised was foreign also. He held his port to be as pure and unadulterated a liquor as his own October; little thought he of depôts between here and

Spain, where Benecarlo is entered in, and a light tawny port, if desired from it, entered out.

Nothing stands still—though we sometimes fancy good-luck does, when we hear that it is coming, but do not see its arrival. At all events, habits, manners, and fashion, do not: the latter, it is true, in some things "harks back" to what was seen a century ago. Long waists, for instance, were coeval with powdered heads, a club or pigtail for the gentlemen, and the hair raised as high as Mont Blanc for the ladies. But the saddest "hark back" of all, is the old sack-like cuff now revived; a most cruel, illiberal, and unfeeling change it is, whoever brought it in. Till lately, if a man wore a shirt for a fortnight by economically sleeping without one, he could, by wearing his tie groom-fashion, make the under article go on another week. He resolves the ensuing week shall exhibit a light-coloured shirt, which his last has not been these last fourteen days: but conceive his horror, when by chance raising his arm before the glass, he finds the state of his linen has been exposed to public view for a fortnight, from the wristband to the elbow! I have heard of people laughing in their sleeves; but such an unfortunate wight as he alluded to may well cry over his.

About the time I speak of, when leathers and boot-tops, both brown in colour, were in use, Seymour, the then greatest horse-painter of his day, had about closed his career. If, as we may suppose was the case, the portraits he left behind him were faithful likenesses, it shows our grandsires rode a pretty good sort of nag; and judging by their heads particularly, they could not have been very coarsely bred on the side of either parent; the tapering lower portion of the head, the fine prominent eye, wide jaw, and expanding nostril, showed no

"cart" was in their blood. Where the large, strong, somewhat coach-like hunter was used, I should say it arose from our ancestors not properly appreciating the strength of the high-bred horse; so all men who were not light weight, conceived that great bulk of body, and size of limbs, were indispensable to carry weight; and possibly as what we call three parts, or, perhaps, three-fourths bred horses, were not much bred then among horses less highly bred, sheer strength may have been necessary. There did not then exist the gradations from the thorough-bred that exist now.

Hunters' plates first called for such; the secret then came out, and it was found better breeding stood in good stead of greater apparent strength. Hounds being bred faster, rendered still higher breeding in the horses necessary. I have heard of a huntsman who wished he could have a balloon to carry him by the side of his hounds; such horses as Bright Phœbus, Advance, Clasher, and Clinker, had not then appeared; yet the mere sportsman was fast growing into the hunting men, and among the hunting men, the still more modern term and style of "fast men," sprung up. Such names as Warde, Lampton, Corbet, and many others, convey to us at once the true meaning of what were thorough sportsmen and fox-hunters; but it remained for such names as Forester, Gardiner, Germaine, Holyoake, Maher, White, Dearsley, &c., to show us what "fast men" meant—a *leetle* too fast we may conclude at times, judging from certain little ebullitions of anger and words that people have heard escape *The 'Squire*, when he expected the impetuosity of his field would put his fox out of danger and his hounds into it.

Among the fast ones, though of different grade, we must not forget two never-to-be-forgotten—Jack Stevens

the Whip, and Dick Christian the "anything that was wanted:" colt-breaker, horse-breaker, he constantly was; d—l breaker he would have been, if asked, and had a chance; steeple-chase rider when wanted; agent to buy or sell at any time. I believe he could wind a clever hunter for sale a hundred miles off. The last time I saw him, he came to buy a horse of mine, about a dozen years since, to carry, as he said, Lord Wrancliffe. Of the two, it may be said, the first could ride *anywhere*, the latter *anything*.

Be a man a plain good general sportsman, a hunting man, which indicates a stud in his stable, or be he a veritable fast one, he must always speak of Leicestershire as the finest scenting and fastest-going country in such part of the world as we are acquainted with; but we must not infer from this, that having ridden across it qualifies him to ride anywhere; it may, so far as pace and big fences go; but it really requires far more judgment and knowledge of hunting to ride well to hounds in many other countries. Great judgment of pace, and what and where liberties may or may not be taken with a horse, as in riding a race, are indispensable, if a man means to be carried to the finish in such a clipping country as Leicestershire. But far more knowledge of fox-hounds and hunting is required, to see the finish in many others. A horse having been hunted a season in Leicestershire, is certainly a feather in his cap, if he went well; go, jump, and last, it proves he can; but other qualities, more useful if not so brilliant, are wanted in other countries.

Some months since, a friend who hunts in Essex told me he had bought a horse at a very high figure. "Then of course," said I, "he is a clever one." "I don't know," said my friend, looking not quite pleased, "much about

his mere cleverness; but this I can tell you, he has been hunted two seasons in Leicestershire," and looking a little more complacently, "I want your advice as to what is best to do with him till the season comes on." "Sell him," said I. "Sell him!" literally roared my friend. "You asked my advice," I said, "and you have it. Sell him; he'll break your neck in Essex." Such catastrophe luckily did not happen; but he came head-over-heels the second time he was out, and broke one of his knees most comfortably, so a letter informed me.

Personally, I never could ride a sticky jumper; they always made me nervous; I could not give them credit for intending to jump. I never could ride, or did, except occasionally, in a sticky, pottering country. I say this from no affectation, for I candidly allow such horses and such countries frightened me to death. I once bought a horse solely on the character given of him by the stud-groom, which was—"He jumps like a cat, and has always a leg to spare." This was quite true, but I could not ride him; put him at a fence as freely as you would, he always would take it comparatively in a stand, and would make one-two of a leap that any good free-going galloway would clear at one. I sold him to an Essex farmer, of whom Lord Petre bought him, solely from his handiness in fencing. There can be no doubt but the most brilliant and determined jumpers are quite useless in a blind country. A man, therefore, in such a country has but the choice of three measures —to learn to ride what I call pottering jumpers; get a roll or two every day he goes out on other sorts; or leave the country. As regards myself, I should say, in betting phrase, "the latter for choice."

With studs as had such men as Lords Plymouth and Wilton, and many others with their fortunes, and if I

could ride as well as them, I should, perhaps, prefer Leicestershire to any other country; but if a man can keep but (say) four hunters, he has no business there, except for a week or two occasionally, to see how the thing is done at head-quarters.

How men "go" now, who are domesticating at Melton, Leicester, and thereabouts, I only know from hearsay; most probably quite as well in Life-Guardsman's boots as with white tops, though the former, to my prejudiced eye, do savour a little more of *La Chasse* and *Le Forêt* than the Market Harbro' country.

However the field may go at home, it seems we are likely to have a field for operations of quite a different kind elsewhere, a pretty extensive country to cross, where the would-be masters are not likely to carry on their differences quite as courteously as do M.F.H.'s usually settle their misunderstandings as to disputed countries. Doubtless the same good old strain of blood still exists that was always ready to "fly to a halloo" when game is afoot, enterprise to be undertaken, and glory to be achieved. The old hardy sort are mostly gone; their hunting days are over. Let us hope the young entries will not, from our change of habit in the more luxurious mode of treating them "at walks," prove softer than were the old Bruisers, Boxers, Dauntless, Termagants, and Terribles of old.

To drop figurative representation, it is no doubt very luxurious never to be exposed to the so-styled "rude elements." The complexion becomes more delicate—"Oh! great desideratum in a man." We undergo no fatigue—very proper, we must allow, for a young, old, or any lady. We sit on luxurious soft cushions as we travel, instead of the straw-stuffed ones of a mail or stage-coach; so even the part we sit on becomes soft

and delicate. There can be no possible objection to this, when our present youth seldom get into a saddle. An omnibus is far more comfortable than used to be the Stanhope in a wintry day. It is so, and warmer. Let us hope that those thinking so may not feel a little chilly should any of them find themselves enjoying their *caviare* on the banks of the Dnieper or Dniester. Won't they?

NOBS AND SNOBS.

It is a common observation, when we find anything to be of a more than usual complex nature, to say that "it would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer to make it out." Now whether any peculiar statistic organization of matters of transatlantic origin cause a more than usual complexity of arrangement, or whether Philadelphian lawyers are endowed with more astute powers of unravelling mysteries, I know not, nor does it matter to us Englishers; but this I can truly say, I did once ask a veritable Philadelphian expounder of laws, if he knew the derivation of the term "snob." He admitted he was in a "regular fix;" therefore if I use a term of which I merely know the import, I may well be excused. Nimrod, that great authority of his day, uses it, but candidly admits himself as much in the dark as to its derivation as myself. We minor planets should not criticise a star that shone so resplendently; but, aware of the light in which Nimrod regarded the word, I think he has done something like injustice to the owner of the "little bay," in designating him by any epithet that savoured of decided inferiority; for our author states Snob "went well," so much so as to attract observation and admiration, where to excite either is no easy matter, and that he went as long as he could: our author as a writer did the same—no man can do more. Again, Snob, though so desig-

nated, speaks of his horse as the best in his stable. This shows he was not one accustomed to get a day now and then, with always the same pair of ears before him. But much further than this, when such a man as Lord Alvanley could, on a five days' acquaintance in the field, ask Snob to his table, any one who had had the advantage of being known to the above nobleman, must be quite aware he was not in the habit of inviting guests of vulgarity of manner, or of decidedly coarse address. A "rural-looking man," as some exquisite termed our hero, Snob might be; a provincial he was; and allowing Leicestershire men their "crown of bays," as regards their high-breeding, fortunes, style, and riding, candour will not be silenced on asserting, that as finished gentlemen, and perhaps more perfect sportsmen, are to be found in the provinces, as are to be found located at Melton, Leicester, Quorndon, Oakham, Lowesby, or any of the many localities in which we find stabling and boxes to suit the extent of all studs, from the unpretending, but good and judicious rider, who with four horses gets regularly his three or four days a week, and usually sees his fox killed, to the one who with ten, and a second horse each day, could not, perhaps, give in as good an account of noses he saw run into.

That a man may do this we know, and if his means do not admit of his doing more, he is a sensible man who is content to get what hunting he can with a short stud. I have at times, hunted (for a time) six days a week with four horses; have had half-a-dozen to do the same thing; sometimes only half the number, to get as much hunting as keeping my horses up to the mark allowed. It was not, however, choice that induced me to bring my stable so low in number; but not having a fortune to keep up what could be termed a stud of hunters, without an

occasional pull on the right side of the book, I often sold out when a tempting price was offered me, and have often parted with a horse for the consideration of the two hundred, that had I had a large fortune, and been asked his price by a nobleman, I should have said, "Your estate." From my not being in such enviable situation, probably Nimrod might have called me a Snob; so be it: we are told in dramatic language that it is the fate of some mortals to bear "the proud man's contumely;" why should not I the author's? for we are not all Nobs. But as such proceedings as I have mentioned are much more in use among sporting men than it may be supposed they are, let us see how far they may or may not merit reprehension.

A noble lord with whom I had the honour of being acquainted, has more than once told me he calculated on five hundred a year as about the sum it usually cost him in, as we technically term it, "wear and tear of horse-flesh:" the sum appears a large one no doubt, but I believe it was about fact, and is to be accounted for. In the first place, for himself, his huntsman, and whips, he had usually about five-and-twenty horses in his stables; six or seven carriage horses; then his own hacks, ladies' riding horses, phaeton horses, ponies, servants' hacks, two or three kennel hacks, and a supernumary or two that were for any and everybody's use; thus, he really had about five-and-forty at rack and manger; his horses of every class were of the first-rate sort, and among such a lot there was always a moderate stable-full of, as he termed them, the lame, halt, and blind. He was one who would not part with a favourite horse if a principality had been offered for him; in proof of which, his lordship was told by his huntsman a most extravagant price was offered for one of the horses he rode: "Well,"

said the truly noble master, "if the horse carries you as you like, say he is not to be sold; but if you choose for your own advantage to give him up—he cost me eighty as a five-year-old—put the extra money in your pocket, buy another, and make a hunter of him as you have of Broadcast." His lordship's veterans on the superannuated list would have furnished a troop for a veteran cavalry battalion, if such a corps existed, for he never sold a good, or kept a bad one; so when, from age or accident, three hundred was reduced to thirty, and ocasionally death or severe injury sent a high-priced horse to feed the hounds he had followed, five hundred might be the amount of wear and tear to a man who never made a shilling by any horse in his stable.

There are men who are quite content with a couple of hunters, or at most three, and would hold it *infra dig.* to let it be known they sold a horse to put fifty or a hundred in their pocket. I quite applaud them, admit their habit as more commendable—nay, more gentlemanly than mine; but I had an unfortunate mania for seeing a certain, or perhaps rather uncertain, but still a number of uniform suits of clothing, and horses under them, in my stable; and although no man detested more than I ever did anything like horse-dealing, and never volunteered the sale of any horse to make money by him, my love of walking behind a number of full stalls was greater still; so I sold out when asked to do so: thus far, I was a Snob. Had I owned ten thousand a year, I should have acted differently.

It might be asked, why should any man wish to have sixteen or six hunters in his stable, if three would give him all the hunting his time or opportunity afforded him the means of enjoying? I can only reply to such a question by asking, if a man has a gallery full of pictures,

why should he purchase more, when he would be puzzled to find a place to hang them up? The answer is easy: he sees a picture that he has not; the subject, the drawing, grouping, or colouring pleases him; he buys it. Another man has as many horses as he wants, but he sees another that has some attribute that pleases; he buys him. No man of sense can deny but that a wish to possess a fine specimen of artistic talent shews a more refined taste than a wish for a specimen of mere animal creation; but the thirst for possession of what we wish, but do not want, is only the more justifiable, or its reverse, in the estimation of persons of different habits and pursuits, or in the thing itself.

Could such a *lusus naturæ* be produced as an animal who could, with ease to himself and pleasure to his rider, carry him with hounds six days a week, a sensible man and true lover of hunting would highly prize such a specimen of all but perpetual motion; he would see the find, the chase, and the kill. Lord Plymouth, with his once nearly or quite thirty hunters, could do no more. But I am free to say, that could such an animal be produced and presented to me, carry me as he might, I would at once decline hunting rather than everlastingly ride THE bay horse; and I could mention many others who would do the same. This may be attributed to pride and vanity: I cannot refute such allegation; but independent of this, there is (at least I and many others have found it so) an indescribable pleasure in seeing a fresh pair of ears before us. It is really something like the gratification of dressing for dinner. We are not perhaps more comfortable in an old thread-bare coat and trowsers, than in an easy shooting-jacket, and certainly not more expensively attired; but if we only sit down to a herring and a mutton chop, we feel something like the

gentleman if we have doffed the gaiters and see a stocking below the trowsers, albeit that stocking be a cotton one.

There is, moreover, to a riding man, a certain pleasure in humouring or counteracting the different habits and tempers of different horses. But beyond this, oh! the pleasure of a servant coming in—"The men are gone to stable, sir." This, when a pint and an extra two glasses of port, furtively as it were stolen from yourself, has put you in a mood to be pleased with all that can afford pleasure; we will say a friend is with you; you sagely reflect that the remains of a bottle of port are only available for lunch, so "let to-morrow take care of itself," you take care of what remains for the day; this, with the half-a-dozen half-glasses of sherry at dinner, just about puts you and your friend in the cue to delight in seeing half-a-dozen nice ones, neatly bedded up, hoods stripped off their loins, and your ears saluted by a gentle grinding operation of mouths, that indicates he that has gone to-day is none the worse for it, and that either of his companions is more or less fit to go to-morrow. "Be this eternity!" a man might, in the language of the poet, say; but he recollects, or is reminded, "Coffee waits, sir;" and then higher attraction in the drawing-room calls him from the contemplation of what is only surpassed by objects of far higher order that he knows he shall meet there, and to challenge the smiles of whom he is precisely in the humour to call forth every attribute he may own, to please. It would be improper to call this heaven, but it is an earthly elysium that only those who have lost its presence can appreciate. Let me hope there is nothing Snobbish in this, though a little judgment in buying, nerve and hands to make a hunter, may conduce to a man's keeping down stable expenses, by

letting the last season's five-year-old go a year after at a hundred over cost price. The bit of steel worth only a half-penny, made into a razor is worth five shillings. Hunters certainly do not bring such advance on cost to the manufacturer of them; still they may be made by an artist a means of bringing the corn-merchant's bill into small compass, and to a man who does not require them to pay for his living, may more or less be made to pay for their own. More than this no man can expect, and at the same time to hold his position as a gentleman.

The amateur in pictures will consider an insatiate desire of fresh purchases as natural and commendable; but no powers could make him think a desire for more horses than would be absolutely necessary for use could be entertained by any sane man; he would hold the man who did so, as meriting an appellation (if there is one) synonymous to a Snob. Some amateurs of horses, but let us hope only a very few, would hold the other in about the same estimation, though there can be no possible doubt as to which of the two evinces in his taste and pursuit the most refinement of idea. Let a man admire both, and we will set the one predilection against the other, and the admiration of that which is admirable—the one the production of art, the other of nature—shews a mind capable of estimating anything beautiful in its way: but if a man can merely admire a living horse, he comes much into the character that Somerville, true sportsman as he was, satirizes in the following biting terms of reprehension and contempt:

> "See how mean, how low, the bookless, sauntering youth,
> Proud of the seat that dignifies his cup,
> And rusty jingling couples by his side!
> Be thou of other mould."

Observations that alone would show that, if our poet

was versed in all the mysteries of kennel discipline kennel management, and hunting craft, he was versed in matters and ideas of a far higher order.

There are two opposite characters, that in the field would both be termed Snobs—one knowing little or nothing of sporting; and one who knows all about hounds and horses, but nothing or little of anything else. Both would deserve the title, though the last might pass muster with the huntsman and whips, but certes with them only, or those whose ideas soared no higher.

This brings to my mind observations I have lately read, eulogising railroads as a great acquisition to hunting men. Such observations, if a writer seeks popularity among a particular class, may produce such desired (which is not synonymous with desirable) effect; but not seeking popularity with any particular clique, I venture to differ in opinion, and must consider that where the iron way brings weekly one real sportsman to a fixture, it favours a hunt with a dozen veritable Snobs. I mean no illiberal allusion as to the position or avocation in life of these London exports, and occasionally a sample may be brought down that would be welcomed by a whole field; but where a cargo is brought down, I should consider their arrival would be hailed by a M.F.H. with about the same feelings as would be experienced by the owner of a house in Belgrave Square, if a couple of omnibuses brought their forty insides and outsides from Cheapside, as an addition to his, or rather his lady's guests at a rout.

In the first place, a man hunting once a week, and that probably usually with the Queen's, as being certain of a gallop, is certainly a man hunting, but I do not consider as QUITE a "hunting man." Such men have no

standing in a country; probably their names are unknown, and their persons also, further than as the man on THE chestnut horse, who is seen when the fixture suits him. He cares nothing for the anger of Farmer Giles; thinks no more of his fences, clover, or turnips, than Giles cares about the other's consols, bills of lading, trowsers, calico, or satinet, as the case may be; so the known are expected to, and in fact do, produce their purses, to make amends for the depredations of the great or little unknown.

Horse-dealers hunting merely to shew their horses, unless they are of the superior kind, are sometimes objected to, by masters of hounds; but such persons are sure to be known by many of the hunt, so they usually conduct themselves properly. But a man may sell stockings for years, and yet not be recognized by any one out, unless it be by his neighbour who sells carpeting at 200 and something, in Oxford Street; so he may do all the mischief he possibly can, and then the rail carries him home where he fears no censure, and ensconces himself comfortably in his easy-chair, as a certain nameless, but often in London to be met with little animal, does in one of the good man's own rugs.

Real hunting men usually reside on their own estates, or rent a country residence for the hunting season; so, when they find convenience in the rail, it is to take them to a meet in a drawing-room in London, at eleven o'clock at night, not to one at the cover-side at half-past ten in the morning. A great gratification, no doubt, it is to see fifty beautiful women, with all the advantages of brilliant light, superb dress, and high spirits; yet this WAS dispensed with, for five months in the year; and perhaps it would be just as well for many if they dispensed with coming from London to see fifty fox-hounds

in the open air. If a man hunts and ever has hunted but seldom, he is most probably something closely bordering on a Snob—in the field, at least, will be thought so, if he hunts enough to make himself a sportsman; unless his fortune is already made, he runs a great chance of becoming anything but a Nob in his business.

Of course, such observations in no way aim at men of high standing and large means, although such may and do hunt from London. Such men are known; have possibly hunted much, and are persons who could keep their hunters and become inhabitants of the country; but that they prefer, and perhaps wisely prefer making three thousand a-year of their capital in business, to living on one, as its produce, in the way men unaccustomed to turn capital to its best account would do. Such men are welcomed by the field, and in many such cases the chief regret is, that their occupations prevent their being oftener seen. Such men do not come in swarms; they are not the Jackeens who only began hunting yesterday, and keep as many hunting coats (or perhaps more) than horses, and would not hunt at all if their coat was not a scarlet one; nor am I at all certain but if we could oblige such to wear a top-coat to hide "the pink," as they universally term it, but that such privation would all but put a stopper on their desire for hunting. "Faugh!" as Hamlet says, when he throws down the skull of Yorick. And having said this, let us say no more.

That any dislike of a field to such such high-breds or low-breds does not arise from their not being of the aristocracy is shewn by the cordial greeting often—nay usually shewn to any farmer or yeoman who spares his day from his business to "go with my lord to-morrow." He sports his blue, green, or brown frock, a nag that can

go, and is not unfrequently looked to as a pilot who knows where he is going, and gives a shrewd guess as to where a fox means going to, also. Should the kill take place in the neighbourhood of the worthy yeoman, the highest in the field accepts—not the merely proffered, but produced luncheon, with the same feelings of cordiality as evinced by the donor; who, in his turn, under similar circumstances, would be as cordially welcomed where foreign produce sparkles in its cut crystal, instead of home-production in the foaming jug. And why? He is in his place in the hunting-field; is a friend to sport, a preserver of game, and, better still, a preserver of his own respectability. He, in his turn, would be held an intruder, if, with half-a-dozen boisterous friends, he and they obtruded themselves in a box at the theatre, and astounded the audience by unseemly applause or exclamation in the deepest part of a tragedy, or by laughs that could shake the very seats under them, because that inimitable little unapproachable Mrs. Keeley justly merited the properly-elicited plaudits of the house; he would be there a Snob; and the MAN HUNTING from Oxford Street would be, if there, one of the first to show he knew more of London etiquette, by his condemnation of the countryman's gaucherie.

But in the reverse order of things, we have been giving our attention to Snobs, when, in the proper order of precedence, we should have first paid our *devoirs* to the Nobs; but in some palliation of such seeming dereliction from due respect, we are not to read for Nobs, Noblemen, or always men for whom we can feel much admiration or respect. A man who is fond of bulldogs encourages any scamp who, if he met that staunch and disinterested patron of humanity and punisher of cruelty or vice, Mr. Bishop, of Bond Street, might well quote

"Of all men, most I have avoided thee." The encourager of bulldog sport is hailed among the promoters of bull, bear, or badger-baiting; he is among them, and in the localities they frequent, a Nob.

The man who is known to all the fair and frail frequenters of the saloons of the theatres, the saloon in Piccadilly, and elsewhere, and spends his money there, is there a Nob.

I have said that we must not for Nob, read Nobleman; but verily I have known many, and now know some noblemen, who are quite satisfied by being thought Nobs, and that among those with whom, so long as they mix, Nobs only will they remain.

But we are not to imagine that Nobs are only to be found in the cock or rat-pit; they are patent among all non-professionals in any particular pursuit, and unless that pursuit is one of a high order, a great debasement of the character of the gentleman is certain to be the result. The patroniser of theatricals, so long as he merely sought and kept up the acquaintance of such characters as Kemble, Young, Macready, and others of equally estimable conduct and standing, rather elevates than degrades himself, be he who he may, by selecting men of such talent and conduct as his intimates. But he who (if it still is in existence) is an ostensible character among the low employés of a theatre at the O.P. and P.S. Tavern, becomes a Nob there, but a Snob everywhere else.

Let us now look more particularly to Nobs of a sporting character; and somewhat low, to speak of them in the most favourable terms, such men are. Be he hunting-man, racing, steeple-chasing, match-against-time-man, cricketer, pedestrian, or patroniser of the pugilistic ring—though he may in a proper manner patronise or participate in each pursuit, and yet not lose

the standing of a gentleman—the moment he makes the regular professor of either his companions, is the moment from whence may be dated his abandonment of gentlemanly ideas and habits. Each man who will hold the professor of a favourite sport, as one with whom to be on terms of intimacy, lays himself open to the charge I have made against him; there is here no feeling of prejudice.

A low man, be he as distinguished as he may in pursuits that do not elevate him, is no companion for a man above the common herd; his particular pursuit makes no difference, among pursuits none in themselves intellectual. Some, no doubt, are more to be esteemed than others; but none of such as I have particularised are of a character elevated enough to render the proficients in them, from that cause alone, companions for a gentleman.

We will suppose a case: We have had a capital run, and killed our fox handsomely. There could be nothing ungentlemanly in sending for the huntsman, giving him half-a-dozen glasses of wine, talking over the day's run, and hearing all we could of the pack we admired, and the men who rode the chase to admiration. I could find hundreds who would agree with me in this. But suppose I proposed doing the same thing by my lord's valet, I should have all of them in open arms against me. And why? Because Furzeblossom, the huntsman, could talk of subjects that they could only appreciate, and Le Maire could not. Now most certainly for the evening I should send for the huntsman, and as certainly should not for Monsieur Le Maire. But suppose I was obliged to be inflicted with the company of one or other of these individuals every night for six months, the case would be widely altered. In a night or two I could get all out

of Mr. Furzeblossom that he knew, his knowledge being confined to the kennel and hunting; but Le Maire has, with his lord, been in countries in which I have not been, and seen men and places I have not seen. So, if I am to pass a hundred and eighty-two and a-half evenings with a servant, in mercy give me the most intellectual one, and one from whom I may, and probably should, get valuable information.

Associating with professors of any sort frequently turns out far less satisfactory than might be anticipated; but mixing with the professors of low or common-place pursuits is sure to be expensive, and all but as sure to be degrading.

Sporting-men, unless men of high standing, are apt to be very improperly stigmatised by persons of opposite habits. Low such characters may be, and are; but not a bit more so than actors, musicians, singers, dancers, lawyers'-clerks, medical pupils, or any other set of men, if they are of a low order and low habits. It is not the avocation alone that makes a man low, it is the habits and mind of the man. Mr. Jackson, the teacher and professor of boxing, though he did exhibit in the prize-ring, was a man that those of unblemished character and high standing often shook hands with. I once dined at table with him and eight other persons, when a duke, and a highly-estimated duke, was the host; that noble was not a mere Nob, or ever held as such; nor was Jackson a Snob — in truth, his manners were gentlemanly, and still more, his universal conduct exemplary.

Among our professional steeple-chase riders are to be found men of high respectability, good manners, and irreproachable conduct; those who are, I rank higher than Nobs. But suppose I could point out not only

a Nob, but a nobleman who gave and received hospitalities to and from one of our steeple-chase riders, and he not one pre-eminent in the estimation of the generality of men. Suppose we will say at cards, language was at times used between such individuals as only befitted their (then) liason, I think it may fairly be said that EVEN Nob was too high a term for the one, but quite appropriate to the other—a distinguishing title we will hope he will eventually grow to estimate at its proper value.

My pen not entitling me to the distinguished position of Nob, and not being emulative of such distinction in its general phase, I trust I shall be permitted to shelter myself under its antagonistic epithet.

THE SEASON.

"THERE is a season for all things." The old adage that puts forth such axiom, alludes, I conceive, metaphorically, to the taking a fitting moment to perform any act we perpetrate; but without any figurative meaning, there is a season at which all things are at their best, and flourish most, if dependent on fluctuation of periods. All the vegetable kingdom has its particular season. The denizens of the water, salt or fresh, have theirs. All animals of the earth, in a wild state, have equally certain seasons assigned them, in which they periodically are guided by natural impulses. They love (if such term may be applied to mere animal desire), breed, fatten, undergo privation, sleep, or are on the alert. Their dispositions are greatly dependent on the season; for there are those of a gregarious genus which live in perfect unity together the greater part of the year, at a particular season separate, each seeking its own gratification, and, when then meeting, commence a hostile onset that only terminates in the strongest or most determined driving his adversary from the trysting spot.

These fluctuations in the state and habits of wild animals, and in some degree in the dispositions also, are greatly modified, and in some particular points totally changed, by domestication: eradicated altogether

they cannot be, while the ordinary impulses of nature remain; nor is it necessary they should be, so long as we can so control them as to prevent consequences occurring that would be prejudicial to ourselves or to the other animals we domesticate.

Man seems (indeed is) the only animal who attempts to make a season for himself. Figuratively speaking, he does do this; but it is only in figurative terms we can say he does so. Art can render every passage, staircase, hall, vestibule, and apartment of the mansion as warm during an intense frost in January as in the warmest day in July; but here his limited power very properly ceases; the effect of his hot air or hot water tubes, ingenious and triumphant as are their effects in the prescribed space where his ingenuity is permitted to prevail, would be of no avail if exposed to the stern out-of-door presence of nature: over that we have no earthly control. It is true, steam can drive a vessel through the waters, even to a certain degree against the wind itself; but it is only to that *certain degree* that it can do so, and the beautiful idea emanating from that mine of poetic imagination, the mind of Byron, describes the vessel's course by saying—

> "She walks the waters like a thing of life,
> And seems to drive the elements to strife,"

though it could be still quoted as even more applicable where steam gives an extended power to navigation, yet leaves the most powerful production of naval architecture a mere child's toy in the hands of the giant, when the season brings the overwhelming and roaring tempest in contact with the comparatively fragile specimen of man's ingenuity.

The conviction that it would be so, under certain circumstances, need in no way cause any cessation in the efforts of man in this or in any other way, to render natural effects as innocuous as our limited powers may permit us to render them; the conviction when attained is only a salutary lesson to man not to overrate his pretensions, or to fancy that because we can by art shield ourselves from some of the effects of natural causes, that art can subdue Nature in her course. The wall may, if strong enough, shelter us from some of the effects of the tempest; but that tempest still rages on, and boasted man is in such a case but the prototype of the sheep: instinct teaches that animal to shelter itself by some prominence erected by nature, man by one raised by art; the one has no more power than the other: in such a case the very lamb might say to Imperial Cæsar, "We are not in Rome now."

Thus it should seem, that though man may to a certain degree make a season for himself, that is, constitute a particular part of the year as the season in which he may be pleased to do particular things, it is only in certain cases in which he can do even this. It is quite certain he may give balls and routs at any time of the year he may think proper, if he can find persons silly enough to attend them if given, when the months are those which render such assemblies anything but agreeable. He may ride up Rotten Row any day, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December; but a little snipe-shooting in the country, or a little skating on the Serpentine in August, in some such words as Burns uses:

"I' faith he canna fa that."

Yet, to my unsophisticated and unfashionable mind,

he does do what appears as unaccountable as would be the wish to shoot snipe or skate at a season unfitted to either.

I am penning these sheets in the month of April, a period that is considered the commencement of the London season: for the last month we have been accommodated with ladders on the pavement, which if a man is superstitious enough to believe it to be unlucky to walk under, he is permitted the option of walking into the street to avoid; or if of more heroic mould and mind, he dares the penalty of walking under, his clothes are accommodated by a superstratum of stone-coloured wash from the brush of the artisan above him. But Mivart's must be brushed up, for the reception of the foreign potentate; Limmer, for those who shrewdly guess that West Australian would have some chance against old Mountjoy and his wheelbarrow. Those who have been bankrupt must titivate, to show that though the master or pretended master of the concern has had a certificate of the third class, there remains still the shop; and somehow, there remains, or at least is, a stock as select and abundant as ever. Those who intend to become bankrupt, titivate for two reasons—first, that such intentions may not be suspected (though doing up expensively really does look suspicious); and secondly, because it may give a fillip to trade for a few weeks prior to—in racing phrase—"the event coming off;" and when it does, the cost only goes down to trade expenses, but farther than trade expenses being allowed. Mr. Stickemalltightly having had a villa at Twickenham, is seldom brought against him by the kind of jury his conduct is tried by, where all sail in the same boat, and usually on in the same tack; but it would be derogatory to the trade in general, to carp at such gentlemanly

expense. Noblemen have villas; why should not the trade have theirs? Possibly the leniency among the clique arises from the idea, or rather fact—"Your turn to-day, ours some other;" so each losing or gaining a few hundreds in turn, keeps up the ball, and verily the villas.

Lodgings to let, or apartments furnished, now vanish from windows where for some weeks they have remained stationary. Visions of one guinea or ten, expected and scrupulously demanded on Monday morning, float before the eyes of craving landladies: sixpence a scuttle for coals, which brings them to about thirty-five shillings per ton, when to be bought for about twenty. Joints that are to be cut from, before dressing, without leave, and sometimes afterwards with, hold out not a prospect, but a certainty, as is often said—that one person does not know how another lives; though living in lodgings very much elucidates how landladies, their servants, and occasionally their friends, do live.

House-agents and their subordinates now bustle about like the inferior myrmidons of the law in term time. Mr. Findahome, having been honoured by instructions to procure a house in a fashionable situation for Lord ——, engages one at five hundred for the season, by which Mr. Findahome pockets about thirty pounds for his commission, drawing up agreements, and making out an inventory.

My Lord gets a most uncomfortable home, when compared to the one he is accustomed to at the Castle Hall or Park, but tolerates it from its situation. The servants find there are not things for their use in their several capacities, but are silenced by a sovereign or two properly applied; and then it is wonderful how they find they can make a saucepan do duty for a stewpan, and

one of the valet's brushes for a housemaid's; with this reservation only—that they undergo no personal inconvenience.

Riding-masters, at the beginning of the season, buy up a few worthless blood-like weeds at Tattersalls', useful for no other earthly purpose than that of permitting novices to sit on their backs: these will be seen with John and Joe and Sam and Dick on them, riding lady-fashion, with a rug imitative of a habit-skirt, practising so as to be trusted, as accustomed to carry ladies: after John and Joe and Sam and Dick, comes—not Dorothy Draggletail, but the riding-master's daughter, who gives the finishing touch, and, if a good horsewoman, probably renders the horses fit to carry ladies, whatever the master may do as to rendering the ladies fit to ride them.

That there are good and capable riding-masters and mistresses to be had in London, is quite certain; but it would be invidious to mention names. I should certainly, in a general way, recommend the mistresses; for where they make riding their study, I must, under ordinary circumstances, award the superiority to them over the men; that is, in teaching ladies. One great feature in their superiority is, they have usually better hands; and having so, horses more readily become handy and docile under their control, than when under men, who are a little apt to attempt that by force, that a woman is sure to succeed in by patience and more gentle usage.

Scarlet coats are now laid by; the bleaching liquid stands untouched on the shelf; the top-boots, with their soles upwards on their rack, seem as if kicking at a season when their resplendent polish is no longer heeded. The huntsman and whips, nothing loth, put aside their

pinks for full six months, unless produced for a day or two where their wearers keep the course at some races patronised by their hunt. Hunters get their dose of physic, as a preliminary step to the setting about repairing the damage done to legs by all the casualties the hunter is subject to during his season; those to be kept over are got fresh, to invigorate them for the next season; those to be sold, to invigorate them prior to their appearance at "the Corner." The huntsman and feeder, in accordance with their simple but efficacious formulæ, administer their tonics or laxatives in the kennel, as each case may require, and produce their dressing for skin and coat: the season of rest has begun, and hounds yawn and stretch themselves, not from fatigue, but in pure enjoyment of their ease and quiet.

The keenest sportsman, though he may have looked with regret on the termination of his sport, when in prospective, finds, as the sun gets warmer, his enthusiasm relax, turns his attention to other pursuits and other pleasures, and feels, while he confesses it, that there is a season for all things.

Steeple-chase horses may now thankfully consider their season as over: happy the one whose pretensions do not cause him to rank high as a hurdle-racer, otherwise his season would probably continue so long as his powers rendered him a good speculation to his owner.

If we were disposed to disgrace the name of sporting, by inserting in its category events that have no redeeming points to urge in mitigation of their usual atrocity, we may say matches against time have no prescribed season: they unfortunately, like many other acts of a disgraceful nature, are ever in season, if an opportunity to make money by cruelty or robbery, and sometimes by both, presents itself. I am not one to carp at the

calling upon any extraordinary powers of speed and endurance in horse or man, when by mere fair exertion such attributes can be exhibited. I have taxed the powers I once possessed in my own person too often and too severely, to be likely to be guilty of hypercriticism on any event that has taken or may take place. I have seen matches against time won by horses without more exertion, or indeed nearly as much, as I have often made myself; but because such a circumstance may occasionally occur, it in no way renders unwarrantable calls on the powers of the best of horses (for of the best they must be) less cruel, less monstrous, or less atrocious. Sport and amusement, where they exist, are no excuse for wanton cruelty, or cruelty of any sort; but in long matches against time, there is neither sport nor amusement: a fiendish, disgraceful avarice is the only usual incentive to making such a match. Witness, for instance, the one that lately occurred in driving a pony from Oxford to London, and back, where a brute in man's form could sit for hours behind a too good little animal, and calmly, and without any compunctious feeling, witness the powers of nature gradually sinking under efforts to accomplish a task, that it will inflict eternal disgrace on the owner of the animal to have attempted to make him accomplish. It is true, that most laudable of societies, the one for the suppression of cruelty, sent a proper person to witness the match, and note down such cruelty as he might see take place. Laudable as was the motive of the society in sending, it availed little: to our discredit as a nation, there was not, nor is, any law to prevent such exhibition. The fine, if the wager is lost, only makes the loss a mere trifle more; and if won, the savage who pockets his winnings laughs at a fine that brings no punishment: give the fellow a couple of hundred at the cart's tail, and then we should

deter him from such conduct in future. It has been very strongly and very properly proposed to do away altogether with flogging in the army, nor ought a brave fellow to be subject to such disgrace; but we cannot disgrace such a brute as I have alluded to, and, what is worse, we cannot in any way severely punish him. I know but of one way in which this could or can be legally done —which is, for every man who holds himself, I will not say a gentleman, but one wishing to be respected in the town he lives, to evince his disapproval of such conduct by never darkening the door of one who could perpetrate it.

But a far different subject now comes before us as regards the season. It is now that thousands of the loveliest forms and faces the world can produce arrive from the country, and grace our metropolis, as if to show the vast amount of beauty indigenous to our native land: nor, in our happy country, is the contemplation of such beauty confined to the saloons of its magnates; no, here, as the glorious tints of the sky are alike open to the peasant as the peer, elevating the mind of man to thoughts and feelings of sublimity, so does the contemplation of beauty in its softest guise raise the thoughts to a proper appreciation of the fascination, worth, and character of woman.

If anything were wanting to prove the influence, nay, the sovereign sway of fashion, few things could do this so efficaciously as the London season; for be a man's pursuits and propensities what they may, one and all, if above the poorer classes, leave town and come to town at the same time. The man fond of country sports, very naturally resides in the country during those months his favourite amusements can be pursued, and he sets the enjoyments of those against the bleak and cheerless fea-

tures of the country at such time; but he is not alone in residing out of town during the winter months. The man who never saw or would wish to see a pack of hounds, most unaccountably seeks his country seat at a time when a love of sport alone makes it tolerable.

Few men, from inclination, pursuits, and habit, are more attached to a country life than myself; few more fret and chafe at being confined to London at a season when I have from boyhood been accustomed to

"Top the barred gate and brush the thorny-twining hedge."

But if I cannot do that, or hear

"Shrill horns proclaim his flight,"

I would rather in winter hear the horns of the itinerant band of Germans, who give us an overture, or a selection from one, in our streets, than revel in the sylvan discord made by

"The noisy geese that gabble o'er the pool."

The beauties of the country must be appreciated by any mind and taste not formed of the coarsest materials; but to be appreciated they must be seen; and commend me to any beauties visible in any ordinary locality, where leafless trees, frost-parched meadows, and arable land guiltless of a green stem, alone constitute the beauties of nature, these enlivened by the occasional presence of

"A cock on a dunghill, or a crow on a tree."

The non-sportsman may say, that ensconced in an easy chair in his library, he neither heeds the prospect out of doors, or cares for society in. No doubt he might thus sit

"Alone in his glory;"

but so he might in one of the old-fashioned, but truly comfortable houses in Harley Street; or if

"On sylvan scenes intent,"

a house overlooking the park would give quite as much reminiscence of the country in winter as any reasonable man could require, so far as picturesque scenery in December is concerned.

"The feathered songsters of the grove" are a constant and fertile theme for poetic praise, and the country is delightful when we do hear them; but when we don't, and listen and listen in the hope of hearing something to remind us of animated nature, but cannot "by this and that," as Pat says, I would rather hear oysters bawled, as they passed my door, than hear nothing.

It may be asked, are these the feelings of a fox-hunter, these the sentiments of a countryman? Quite so; that is, they are about the feelings of a fox-hunter if debarred from hunting fox, of a countryman if not (from any cause) enabled to follow the pursuits of the country. A more imaginative, more enthusiastic, or better-regulated mind than mine might suggest the pleasure of lingering about localities where such pursuits as he was wont to join in are carried on: some men might find gratification under such circumstances; so they might in lingering in

"Some banquet-hall deserted."

I cannot even in imagination conceive any feeling but that of melancholy regret in either case. Would the direst London man feel happy in London, if prevented seeing, hearing, or mixing in London pursuits? I should say not. If he remained in it under such privations, it could only arise from his being the slave of habit. The majority of those who remain in the country during the winter season (not being sportsmen) do not stay there

from liking the country, but from disliking still more to be seen in London at any unfashionable season; they punish themselves for fashion's sake. I must say, I think fate awards a quite sufficient share of punishment in this life to every man, and over which he has no control; whether it is wise to punish ourselves for fashion's sake, I leave wiser heads than mine to determine.

I believe from hearsay that the arrival of families from the country, which may be considered as a proof that the London season has commenced, has for more than a century taken place at about the same time of the year it does at present; but I gather from the same source, that the duration of the season has been considerably extended. In the days of that truly English monarch, George the Third, the royal birthday was the 4th of June; this kept and passed, was the signal for fashionable movement to country-seats or watering-places: now grouse-shooting seems the first indication of any move from the metropolis. I quite believe why the period of arrival from the country has remained the same for such a length of time, arises from a cause that the non-sportsman would perhaps hold as *infra dig.* to the magnates to permit to influence their movements; though in the respect alluded to, it certainly does. This is fox-hunting. Even the non-protectionists (of foxes) must admit that a vast number of the most influential and noble of our land are fox-hunters. However fashionable it may be held to be as foreign as possible in our habits, dress, pursuits, and amusements, the fox-hunting blood of Englishmen still gamely fights, and defeats all attempts to render that truly English sport less attractive—and let us hope it ever will do so.

Masters of hounds and their friends will not be beat off their habit of seeing an April fox killed, and the end

of the first week in April is the earliest period such men will consent to leave their country-seats; though, in conformity with fashion, they do consent to continue the season in London much longer than meets the private inclinations of many of them. If any man wishes to be convinced of the absorbing enthusiasm of fox-hunting, its determined resistance to example or fashion by its continuance will afford him quite sufficient proof.

The high and noble among the masters of fox-hounds may, and many do, in conformity with the sway of fashion, and the wishes of the fairer members of their families, fall into style and habits in their houses strictly foreign, consequently strictly fashionable. Their assemblies, conversations, nay, their dinners, are now often quite foreign. The noble baron or "rich sirloin" of beef, the plainly-roasted fat capon, the turkey and chine, and—last remnant of old England—the ponderous plum-pudding, are not only things untalked of, but absolutely unseen—that is, on the table: whether such antediluvian adjuncts may exist or not on side-tables, can be only ascertained by diligent search through the printed *carte* laid by the side of each invited guest; and there, if among the host of foreign dishes enumerated such things should by diligent search be found, the asking for either would cause you to rank about as high in the opinion of the attendants as would the fixing on a servant-of-all-work among the domestics advertised in the *Times*.

A dinner-table was formerly held as a board, on which was displayed the hospitality of the donor of the feast, and the food for the guests; the hostess, when visible through the steam of abundance, was seen at the head of the table; *mais nous avons changé tout cela. Figurez-vous* a lady in the year '56, with a carving-knife in her hand. "Are not then the good things of this life still

produced on the dinner-table?" might inquire some one who had spent the last thirty years in the back woods of America. No doubt they are—that is, such good things as gratify the sight, not the gross sense of feeding. There is the centre ornament that you must dodge round, as you would Nelson's pillar, if you wish to get a glimpse of your *vis-à-vis*. Plated epergnes, and nameless silver, silver gilt, or silver manufactured under Messrs. Elkington's process, into symbolic designs of endless variety; flowers at four times as much cost per head for each guest as formerly gave the whole banquet: these constitute the display on the dining-table.

"But nothing to eat on table," perseveres our uncompromising trans-Atlantic querist. Patience, my friend; you have only your first category of good things yet, you will have two more: the last will enumerate various admissible things, and by the time the ice makes its appearance, if you have not fared luxuriously, I can recommend but one course—go back to America, kill a beaver, dress his tail yourself, you will then have no difficulty in selecting the "*plats*" you wish to dine from.

There can be no doubt of one thing: the high and fashionable do lose the gratification of seeing their country-seats when in the zenith of their beauty. I should feel that no *agréments* of a London season could in any way compensate for such loss; but the feelings of any particular man are no rule whereby to judge of those of another, and the feelings of persons in one position in society are no criterion at all by which to appreciate those of persons in another. The man living in a puggy house at forty-five pounds a year, may "pugh" and "fugh" at the heat, and wonder a noble like, we will say, the Duke of Beaufort and family,

should remain in, as it would be called, the heat of London in July; every one would very properly wonder that the noble duke should do so, *if* he felt the heat described, but he does not; the appliances to Beaufort House render that mansion in all its parts as perfectly cool as Badminton, or either of the other country residences annexed to the title. The dust of London is another theme of animadversion from the mouths of many. No doubt the inhabitant of Whitechapel or Commercial Road does feel the dust intolerable, and, as a matter somewhat to be wondered at, so usually does he frequenting the road to Bayswater; but where the aristocracy ride or drive, dust is unseen; in fact, a splashed riding-habit is a thing of no uncommon occurrence; but a dusted riding-hat is unknown.

"The great ought to be made to feel dust and heat, cold and wet, as well as others," says the low-born and low-bred. Think ye so—why? It is not their fault or doing that you are poor or that they are rich; and where persons are deserving of consideration, the great being rich is much oftener than is supposed to be the case, a circumstance that often causes the effects of poverty to be greatly ameliorated in the case of those that are poor.

The sittings of the Houses of Parliament no doubt greatly direct the stay of its members in London; the Peer, as a matter of course, indeed necessity, attends; but what is the incentive to Commoners? Feeling, as they do, the overwhelming wish to get M.P. attached to their name, is a secret only in the keeping of the clique. The expenses of getting in are great, the confinement of remaining in is great, and if we are to believe assertion from their own lips, their patronage now is anything but great. A relative of mine, who was in Parliament, was

once told by the then Minister, that he had asked for more situations under Government for different persons, and had more appointments ceded to his wish, than any member then sitting. "I dare say I have," said my grandfather (for it was he), "and so I intended it should be. I am, my Lord, a man of pretty large independent fortune, and should certainly never have troubled myself to get into Parliament, but with a view to provide for my friends." Members are either less thought of, or think less of other persons, in these days.

Since the railroads have knocked up all other roads, inns, or rather taverns and hotels (for the old regular inns have long departed), look now to seasons far more than they did in former times; for then Bagnigge Wells, Kilburn Wells, Copenhagen Fields, the Horns at Kennington, and sundry other tea-gardens, were the limit of the Sunday country excursions of metropolitan air-seekers; but now twenty miles "is too small a bound" for them. Tea-gardens have vanished, from want of the patronage of the cockney. Prince Walkers and the George at Hounslow now no longer constantly expect the traveller. Old Hartford Bridge could once calculate on its regular receipts, and they were great; so it may now (if still an inn), and may calculate them at about what were once the perquisites of its ostler. Hotels and other places of public entertainment now show each side the line of rail (not road), with perhaps a paltry stable for three horses, when houses of the same size used to have stabling for twenty: these, during the winter, employ one man as boots, ostler, and gardener to a piece of ground the size of a dining-room, unless a bowling-green is perpetrated; the house, stable, garden, and man, during winter, looking each as desolate as the other.

But summer alters the aspect of affairs; fourth-class waiters are engaged, who make as much clatter in a room as does the locomotive on the rail. Parties of ladies and gentlemen, comprising at different times inhabitants from the Minories and Hounsditch to Charing Cross and Oxford Street, arrive; these comprise two classes—those who intend to dine at the ordinary at the usual hour of two o'clock, or others who order a private dinner at the politer hour of three; and as, of course, gentility is manifested by the expense incurred, a dinner is ordered, amounting to three times the expense that would be entered into in such a place, should a party of gentlemen be obliged to dine there. Our private party poison themselves with execrable wine, which they gallantly press on the ladies; on their retiring, pipes are ordered, and some kind of manufacture called brandy is also demanded: let us hope no serious catastrophe may follow such amalgamation; for if it should, a charge of intended suicide I think would lie.

Our party of the *ordinary* sort, in the public room, are by far the wiser of the two. A roast leg of mutton at top, boiled round of beef at bottom, and a hospitable beef-steak-pie to grace the centre, can hurt no man. Potatoes are perfectly innocuous. Of the cabbage, with its shining exterior indicative of its late close proximity to the boiling beef, we will say little, except may the powers of the stomach that can bear it, as Pat says, "never grow less." Of the malt that we may suppose accompanied the dinner, we will only conclude, that if a man takes public-house beer, he holds confinement to his bed from deranged stomach a pleasing little relief from his usual occupation. But is this all? No; gin, the cockney's *Eldorado*, his *fides Achates*, his *gutta vitæ*, follows. Now let us do justice to gin: of all the abo-

minations invented for the use of man, so far as flavour goes, I do think gin the most abominable; but there is a peculiar quality in gin, that my old friend, the late Mr. Warde, M.F.H., who was fond of it, once explained in terms not to be mentioned here, that renders it, if taken occasionally as a medicine, really salutary: thus I will back our ordinary lot to feel far less ill effects from their *day's pleasure* than the more aristocratic mock wine-bibbers.

The ladies returned to our first-rate party; tea is ordered, and hot toast or hot rolls. Our ordinary party also take tea, with mustard-and-cress, or as Bobadil says, "a radish to relish with all." Punch, to keep all quiet, follows the tea with the magnates. One of the gentlemen, in gratitude to the compound he has partaken of, volunteers "Wine, rosy wine;" a lady and gentleman immolate that seemingly simple, but difficult duet, "All's Well." Our party below, the gentlemen waxing warm, now in their shirt-sleeves, prolonging the contents of a clay as none but a regular smoker can, also grow musical, and some one gives "Jump Jim Crow," with proper gesticulations, much to the delight of the ladies, who exclaim, "Well now"—a somewhat indefinite exclamation I allow, but perfectly understood *in its place*. The waiter at last, as directed, comes to give a quarter of an hour's notice, prior to the arrival of the train that usually takes such parties back to Town; pipes are put down, and coats put on; great coats and railroad wrappers are produced, and the bill produced and paid, the gentlemen having taken enough, take a little more, that is something "short," to keep off the night air; the ladies are invited to do the same, who "well now" again at the idea. The train is reached. No one would insinuate that the "cold without" or the

"warm within" had begun to take any effect; but *certes* the ladies laugh somewhat often and somewhat loud, and sundry little half-screams and chidings indicate certain little gallantries on the part of the gentlemen when a tunnel hides any hand that might inadvertently stray from its usual course. Well! if our party are a shade behind-hand in manner and habit from one returning from a flower-show at Chiswick, they are ten times more jovial, and probably to the full as happy; so let them remain: their ideas of amusement injure no one; so let us not turn cynic, and grudge them their season.

But is the season for all sporting at an end in April? Quite the reverse: one of its most exhilarating features has but commenced, namely, racing. Look not invidiously at me, brother fox-hunters; but I do love a bit of racing. I love a race-horse; I really warmly regard riding-boy, head-lad, trainer, and jockey, when each does his duty. I hold the owner of race-horses, when he runs them as a true sportsman, in the highest respect, as one who supports a national amusement—as one who encourages a breed of the finest animals in creation, and conduces to the gratification of thousands; but I do most cordially and wickedly hate, detest, and despise those who would, and often do, thwart the success of such a man. I hate their books, lists, and all that appertains to them. To each severally and separately I say, your season has commenced; to you may it be a short one, and your last.

GOING THE WHOLE HOG.

Most civilized nations are sufficiently acquainted with the general character and habits of each other, to be perfectly conversant with the peculiarities of each, and, as single individuals are prone to do, consider that as extraordinary (if not reprehensible or ridiculous) which others do, if at variance with universal, or indeed particular habit.

The Frenchman holds John Bull as gross, because speaking of him, as a type of his nation, he likes his beef, veal, and mutton roast, instead of stewed. Johnny returns the compliment with interest, because the Frenchman does at times eat frogs, but at no time subjects himself to a fair stand-up fight with fists only. The Italian and Spaniard are held by the inhabitants of Great Britain as assassins, because they avenge their wrongs, or gratify unjustifiable feelings by the stiletto: no one doubts the enormity of such crimes; but is the crime of burking, garotting, or throat-cutting, one exhibiting less of the cowardly assassin, than does the stiletto's point? I should say such show a far more determined cruelty and brutality of mind and act; and we must, with regret, allow that when murder is committed in this country, it has not usually even the palliation of mind frenzied by injury, real or supposed; but has for its incentive, that chief part of English ideas of

all good, namely, getting possession of money. Some persons would imagine, that no man could traverse a transatlantic wood without finding a bowie-knife stuck into his body, or could meet an Indian and come off with the hair on his head. This I could assure such person: he would be far more likely to bring away his scalp safe and sound from among a thousand Indians, than he would his purse from among a similar number of his fellow-countrymen, viewing the funeral of the Duke of Wellington; and further, I can tell him that, on the score of any compunctious feeling, his scalp would be taken by the pale-faced London pickpocket, just as soon as his purse, if he could whip it off as quickly as a copper-faced Indian, and the wig-makers would purchase it. If such were the case, and opportunity offered, there would be more bare pates in London, by a hundred to one, than in all the back woods of America. Rowland might shut up his Macassar oil shop, and Mr. Ross, the wig-maker, would literally supply perukes from *pole* to *pole*.

To our American friends are attributed (or, at least, we attribute) two peculiarities—a levelling distinction of persons, and carrying all they do to the extreme; in a more concise and figurative term, "going the whole hog." I do not quite see that they level persons more than is done here, but they do it in a different way: for instance, they hold that, *primâ facie*, all men are equal, and that merit alone, of some sort or other, raises one man above another; thus, though they may level the mere persons of man, they in no shape level their attributes. In England, we level far more; for if a man belongs to an influential family, be he fool or philosopher, he is pretty sure to command (or, at all events, get) places, though he may be quite unfit to fill them

—sinecures, if quite incapable, and pension for having held high situations, in which, possibly he did nothing. If rich, a man is not only considered as somebody, but as a most worshipped body; if not rich, he is without distinction—nobody. If this is not levelling all men, *en masse*, it is a sweeping levelling of them in classes. It may appear to us an incongruity to hear a person keeping a store or public-house addressed as Colonel: it sounds strange, granted; but if the man has commanded a regiment of any sort, Colonel he virtually is: against this, what have we to say, to addressing a pork-butcher as My Lord, because his brother tradesmen have chosen to select him as their head and chief? This strikes me as "going the whole hog," in point of elevation, with a vengeance.

I humbly conceive there is no nation of earth who goes the entire animal more than John Bull. M. Kossuth was pretty well aware of our tendency in this respect, and found a pretty sprinkling of those, not only going the whole hog, but the entire fool in his case. We cannot fairly and liberally patronise a singer, so as to enable the artist to get a thousand a year; but a hundred a night is to be the little modicum of which John Bull allows himself to be gulled. We will set aside Mademoiselle Jenny Lind; no price was too much to pay her, not as a cantatrice only, but as a high-minded, liberal, and exemplary woman. But against this, I could mention a retired singer, who, as a man, once created as great a *furore*, though during a long life he never gave away as much as Jenny has done in a single gift, among the many she has given; thus showing, that fashion, *furore*, and the "whole hog" system, has more, or quite as much influence, as a proper appreciation of amiability and worth. Had the beastly exhi-

bition of a woman on a bull's back, attached to a balloon, been allowed to go on, probably it would have been "a hit," and she would have been patronised, Cremorne Gardens crammed, and the public disgraced. To save our credit somewhat, we have in the United Empire *one* society, and that but little encouraged, that is a check on such unnatural exhibitions. In this, however laudable it must be allowed such check to be, we certainly cannot be accused of going the whole anything, unless it be the most blessed apathy.

Going up the Rhine is just now an immense hog with our countrymen, and those who are lured there by the somewhat exaggerated description of "the beautiful Rhine," may boast some elevation of thought and mind in their determination; but it is visited by thousands who would hold the renowned Tun of Heidelberg as the best thing they had seen, if it were to be seen; the inundation of such beings rendering the line of tour about as pleasant as the road to Brook Green Fair in fair time. Thus, the man of any mind, who travels with the laudable wish to become acquainted with foreign countries, foreigners, and foreign habits, is gratified, each step he takes and way he turns, by meeting, in the shape of humanity, numberless specimens of ignorance and vulgarity, that with a blush he must admit to be his countrymen, with this addendum, that as such persons "like to live well when they are out pleasuring," the man content with his cotelette and half bottle of Rhenish, finds he pays for it about the price of a good dinner at Stevens'; and a bed, where one is to be had, causes sleeping to be a most expensive relaxation; the usual result of such trip to persons who had no business in such places, being—the son returns as ignorant as before, but a greater puppy; the young

ladies who seldom did much that they ought to do, now of course will do nothing; mamma gives more "tea and talk parties" than before, having more to talk about; and pa' drinks more porter than ever, from lately having had none to drink, at least none of Barclay and Perkins's genuine, fresh pumped up for his use. A travelled gentleman is an entertaining and instructive companion: a travelled vulgarian only disgusts by his ignorant, invidious, and illiberal remarks on every person and everything he has seen, that he had not seen in his own country. John Bull has the character of always grumbling, at home: I suppose he does so; but this I know, a veritable John Bull grumbles twice as much abroad.

John has lately had a hog of still more unusual size to have a go at, and at him he went headlong, and a grand Exhibition many made of themselves in so doing. No doubt the idea and intent under which the project was conceived and carried out, was a great and philanthropic one, and of incalculable benefit it might have been, if the public had regarded it as it was meant they should have done, namely, as a place of instruction as well as amusement; but ninety-nine in a hundred went to it as a puppet-show — a kind of Punch-and-Judy affair—from which they came away about as much improved as they do after seeing the dog take the devil by the nose, which is certainly very funny; and no doubt so, many thought, were the Gladiator and the Asiatic Howdah. I have sounded a few mechanics on the results of their visits to the Exhibition, and, to their credit, I can say most of them had made acute observation on different specimens of their craft exhibited there; but among a class, from whom one might have expected better things, very few indeed had cast an eye on anything of a scientific character; in fact, such parts

of the building as were devoted to such objects were all but deserted. The stalls where silks, tapestry, Bohemian glass, and bijouterie were displayed, were thronged by spectators; the poor Greek slave was stared at till she seemed ashamed of herself, or the gazers; but of these not one in ten would have detected it had she been humpbacked, if the malformation had been slight; they gazed because she was *the* Greek Slave, not because she was *a* beautiful figure, probably thinking how much improved she would have been by a *bustle*, not at the same time being shrewd enough to think how much worse they would have looked without one. That extraordinary machine that drew up water and threw it off in Niagarian cataracts, drew some attention while working, and sundry little squeals and squalls lest it should splash the gossamer dress, or bonnet; but any observation on the important purposes to which it might be applied, I will, in courtesy, suppose to have been made mentally. I certainly heard one from, no doubt, a very precocious juvenile—"Lor', Pa! it's twice as big as our shower bath!" Mamma (I suppose it was) caught him up in a rapture of delight, no doubt cherishing the astute remark, to be retailed as indicative of a scientific turn of mind in her pet. Well, it did show the boy was led to make comparisons. I heard no one else even go so far. Let us hope that, the first *furore* having subsided, the second edition of the Exhibition will, to speak figuratively, be regarded as what it was meant to be—an immense book of knowledge, open to all, though hitherto but looked at in a cursory way by the many.

I will now get a little more into my right line of country. We are told that formerly the real living hog was an animal pursued in England—rather a crusty gentleman to make game of, we will say; but as game I

believe he was held. In Germany, I believe, he is still an object of the chase; and in India his wild habits render him no bad apology for an Ashby Gorse fox; but we have lately had a touch at the whole hog in another way. Thousands have gone to California, thousands to a nearly opposite side of the globe—gold-digging. But tens of thousands have had their gold-digging, or rather digging for it, without stirring from London. They have not looked to this river, that ravine, or the other mountain as their ideal mines of wealth; but they have had their Dutchman, Voltigeur, Teddington, Nancy, Baron Nicholson, and sundry other objects from which they trusted the California would come to them, instead of troubling themselves by going to California; and no doubt a mine of wealth some list-keepers hit upon at first. Oh! that "at *first!*" How many thousands of persons made their thousands at first! how few came off winners, or even scathless, at *last!* Although it is quite certain many list-keepers made a great deal of money at first, I very much doubt if they did so in the end. Betting offices were suggested as localities where betting men and sporting men might find ready means to lay such odds as were the current odds, as regarded different horses, in different races. These odds were usually taken from those betted at Tattersall's, when on races that were in the betting; there we will, therefore, suppose they were fair odds. So far, though harm there might, and may be, in any place that affords facility for betting, there was no *more* harm in a betting-house existing in Cranbourn Street, than in St. James's: thus far, all went on well enough for a time; the list-keeper betted the betting man the current odds against the horse he selected; the other backed the horse or horses to such reasonable amount as

he though proper, and at first all list-keepers paid, nor was there any grumbling on either side, or much harm done; but shortly, "the whole hog" mania stepped in here. So because Mr. This, Captain That, a trainer, a jockey, and a groom backed horses, a whole host of idiots—at least, idiots in this particular—must do the same. Government clerks, merchants' and lawyers' clerks, shopmen, shopboys, apprentices, and porters, all at once fancied they could get money by betting on what they of course knew nothing on earth about; from this, of course, they lost their money; so would the list-keeper lose, if he commenced dealing or trafficking in muslins or mutton-pies, if he knew nothing of either. Then came the outcry that betting-houses were traps for the unwary. We might just as well call Tattersall's sale a trap, because, if a man, knowing nothing of horses, chose to go and buy there, the odds are, he gets a lame, half-blind, broken-winded, or restive brute for his money. What business had he there? Mr. Tattersall did not ask or induce him to pick out a particular horse, or to buy at all; and knowing him, as I do, I am quite sure he would recommend (if asked) such a man *not* to buy without better advice than his own. The list-keeper gave no advice; for of course no one would take it, or suppose he would give an opinion to put money in another man's pocket, and out of his own. There being places where a man may receive a hundred for risking one sovereign, would induce, and no doubt has induced, thousands to risk their money, who would have kept it in their pockets, if no such places had existed. The truth is, it is not that the fair list-keeper was a rogue or a trap, but that half his customers were fools, or they would not have dabbled in what they could know nothing about. I really consider the

business and system of a respectable betting-office was as fair as any game of chance can possibly be,—ten thousand times more fair than most public billiard-tables. Here *is* often a trap laid for a young player; for he plays comparative ignorance, and open display of what he can do, against consummate skill and masked play.

Now comes the accusation against the list-keeper, of taking bets on scratched horses. This, probably, has occasionally been done, but not by the better class. But, suppose it had, I would just ask persons in the habit of betting, one question:—If they had got intelligence that such a horse had won a race, before it reached the list-keeper, and they saw that horse open on his list, would they not instantly back him to the greatest amount they possibly could? I care not what they might answer; but I tell them they would. So it is not all honour on one side, and roguery on the other; but sometimes it was which rogue could be the quickest.

Having now said what I believe to be fair, as regards the many respectable men who were list-keepers—and many there were as respectable as other men whose business it is to make money—we will turn to hundreds in the same line who were anything but respectable. Seeing many betting-offices doing well (or, at least, seeming to do so), they could not be permitted to go on without opposition. So a pack of scamps, who could just find means to erect a desk, got a show-board made, and took a front room, or ground-floor, at a guinea a-week, perhaps paying a week in advance, and set up a betting-office. Could any man be pitied who was duped out of his money by such men—men known to no one, unless to such as most men would be ashamed to be known to? But even here, such man-traps, as no doubt they were, were not traps in the way the public suppose.

They betted fairly enough, so far as giving *sufficient* odds: the unfairness was, they gave too long odds. The trap was in their running off without paying. They took no advantage by betting a novice ten to one, when twenty was the real betting. Any child might get the proper odds laid him. The trap and rascality was, in racing phrase, "bolting when called upon," or, indeed, before. If a fool will put his finger in the fire, let him,—he gets burnt: but all the fires in London need not be put out. Keep the fool at-home, or let some one accompany him with a string to him, and then the fires may go on, for such persons to warm themselves by as are conversant with the nature of burning matters. Scamps and rogues of the very lowest degree, no doubt, were many keepers of betting-lists. Yet, even among those, perhaps some were men with large families, and no means to support them by. These men might not set out with a determination to rob; but, on the contrary, hoped so to square their books as to go on; for it must be quite clear it would be more to a man's interest to make his (say) two hundred a-year, than to make himself an avowed rogue, and run off with three hundred—perhaps less—of the public's money. But a particular event came off—did so in a way to call for money on the list-keeper's part. He had no capital to back himself on, and was swamped. Down he went, or rather (in this) off he went. It might truly be said, he should not have risked other persons' money. No doubt, he should not. But it is not quite unnatural that he should have risked the money belonging to those he cared nothing for, rather than to a certainty see those dear to him starve.

"He ought to starve, or sweep the streets, rather than do wrong. I would!" says a man with his bottle of madeira, or even humble port, before him.

"How do you know that?" another might say; "it is very easy to be courageous with a red hot poker in your hand, and no one to oppose you. It is very easy to be the height of honour, with no temptation to be otherwise."

"Nothing should make me do a dishonourable thing," again says the man with eight hundred a-year to keep him honest.

All that I should say to him, in compliment to his boast that he would not do wrong, would be, "What a precious rascal *you* would be, if you would." And when I saw him with his broom in his hand, actually sweeping, I should believe him; but till then I should be somewhat sceptical. "Human nature is human nature still," and that is not saying it is the soul of honour, or honesty either.

I remember once buying a very clever-looking horse at auction, that I had never seen till at the hammer. The moment he was put into the stable I saw he was a lame one. Now, though I had been simpleton enough to purchase a horse of which I knew nothing, and, further, which looked worth eighty, though I bought him at thirty-five, I was not silly enough to go and complain to the auctioneer, or let my folly be seen; so I got him saddled, got on him, and clapping my heels to him, I cantered him out of the yard; so no one but myself guessed I had got hold of a screw. However, I found the lameness proceeded only from a very bad corn in a state of suppuration. I sold him in less than a month, with a three-quarter shoe on, for seventy.

It may be said I had no cause to complain. As it turned out, I had not; but I did not know it when I took him off. He might have been an incurably lame one, for all I then knew.

Now, this bears closely on people going to promiscuous betting-houses. They lose their money, and then, instead of quietly putting up with the loss, they go proclaiming their folly all over the town. What business have they betting at all? And, above all, what business had they risking their money with a person of whom they knew nothing? Why, about as much as I had to buy a horse of which I knew nothing.

Peter Pindar mentions, in one of his works, a sailor who would always shirk going to prayers; and one Sunday morning the boatswain roused him out from behind a cask, and ordered him to go and attend the church service. "I'll go," said the fellow; "but, mind, G—d d—n me if I'll pray."

You can no more make people leave off betting, if disposed to bet, than make them pray if they have no sense of religion in them.

Now, what has the putting down of betting-houses virtually said to the public? Why, this: "You are such a set of fools, that unless we put the means of getting into mischief out of your way, you will be sure to get into it." The Serpentine river will drown people who cannot swim, if they are foolish enough to go into its deep parts. Is it to be dried up on that account? There it is, and there were the betting-houses: no one was forced or asked to walk into either. Let them keep out of both; then neither could do them any harm. But it may very justly be said, betting-houses induced people to bet. Doubtless they did: so does the river induce people to cool themselves in it, in hot weather. They must not, however, unless they are swimmers, go into it in improper places: nor must they bet, unless proficient in betting; and then they must go to proper places to bet, just as much as they must to bathe; otherwise, they

will get swamped in both cases. Putting down betting-houses by the Legislature was, after all, treating the public like a great booby, who has not sense to see a fire, without putting his fingers into it. Let him burn his fingers. No doubt he will roar out lustily. Other boys will ask what he roars for. He will tell them he put his fingers in the fire, and burnt them. Hearing this, the others will keep their fingers out of fires, though a hundred burned round. So, when older boobies lose their money, and tell how and where they lost it, others will keep out of places of the same kind, so soon as they are satisfied they will lose their money there. But it is quite certain, till this is the case they will not—legislate as you will.

Let it not be supposed I would not hold in respect any measure that would put down betting in all its phases. No man ever has shunned it more than myself. But I fear it will be found, that nothing but the population themselves can put it down. Betting-houses might all have been put down in a month, if the public had chosen they should be so. Had people kept away from them, they would all have disappeared much faster than they had accumulated. Sensible people did keep from them, or betted properly. It may be said, "It is not from the fear of men of sense losing their money that we put them down." On whose account, then, did you resolve to take the step? The true answer must be—"On account of the booby alluded to." And who is he? Why, a large portion of the public.

If we saw a man of sporting cut coming out of a betting-office, we should not set *him* down as a simpleton; nor should we any man, whatever his cut might be, if we knew he was conversant with the business—for business it is. But what should we say of a man going to

dabble in the Stock Exchange, if, like myself, for instance, he did not know Three per Cent. Consols from Reduced or Unredeemed somethings I have heard of, but neither remember, nor know what they mean if I did? Yet would, and did, people go to betting-houses, who knew no more of the relative merits of horses, than I do of the chances, or rising or falling of funds or stocks, or whatever they are called. Then came a dodge on the part of the public, and, no doubt, a knowing one they thought it. They consulted advertising oracles, having "*a certainty*" for every event that *is to come* off. It seems almost a slur on public sense, to believe men can be gulled by such assertions. Yet, daily experience tells us that it is so. Does it never strike people, that if the Cotherstones, Voltigeurs, Harry Edwards, Chifneys, and scores of others, *had* certainties, that they need not solicit half-crown "tips?" Why, one racing season, with certainties to bet on, would make a man a millionaire. The best certainty a man could go on, would be to bet the oracles ten to one against each of their prophecies. If the prophets would take the bet, which they would not, the better of the odds would not do badly.

Then there was another dodge in practice. A given number of sapient young, old, or mixed gentlemen clubbed together, and made up a weekly purse for some fellow who had tact enough to persuade them he got certain stable information from all the training establishments we know of, and on his advice they betted their money. Very likely he did know, not only more, but a good deal more, than his paymasters. He tells them, to use the usual term, he knows "where the money is on." It is all nonsense; and he is aware it is. Where and when the thing is to be done in a particular way, the scent is

among a very few indeed, and is only found out when the event is over, and not always then.

The great cleverness shown by these prophets and touts, is, the convincing their dupes that, *but for* a something, the horse they named *must* have won. No doubt he must have done so, if he had not been beat; and the *but for* is, that their assurance as to how the race was intended to come off, or did come off, would have been correct, *but* that they knew nothing about the matter. Why, these very men would, if they had a scent worth knowing, keep it to themselves, and not spoil their own market by telling it to others.

Now, I really am a prophet that may be depended on; for I tell the large majority of those "going the whole hog" in betting, that all of them will in the end rue the doing so, and will lose their money; and those who bet on purchased advice, will find out what the figurative description of the animal means—namely, "Great cry, and little wool."

Well, betting-list houses have been put down. So much the better. The great were strenuous enough in their measures there; though, at worst, betting only causes money to change hands. It is still in the country; not lost. Now, where going the whole hog in ignorance, imbecility, apathy, and clique courtesy, has immolated human life in thousands, and money in hundreds of thousands, let us see whether those in power will be as strenuous in their measures to censure and put down their compeers, whose acts have been more fatal in their effects than all the miserable betting-lists in London. Rank, place, power, *esprit de corps*, and (for all we know) gain, or hopes of gain, in the great, have, figuratively, made them list-keepers in the great game of the

state; and the country has been the sufferer. But one class of that state have at least opened their eyes. It will, perhaps, be well if the other open their ears, albeit they may hear some unpleasant truths.

In sporting phrase, we have "scratched" a few of the over-weighted and incompetent ones. We may possibly see some of the others pulled up, though as yet making strong play—*for themselves.*

AMATEURS AND PROFESSIONALS.

We all know there exists a direct line of demarcation between the professional and non-professional, in all the pursuits and avocations that both undertake, or rather perform; and such distinction may at first appear so perfectly demonstrative as to require but little consideration, and less, or perhaps no explanation. It will not, however, be found quite so easy in many cases as it may be imagined, to find out the precise distinguishing point or line where the limit of the amateur ends, and that of the professional begins, or *vice versâ*.

Professors there are, goodness (or rather badness) knows, in plenty in all cases; and most people, I imagine, have found such class particularly numerous among friends and acquaintance; but when they are really called upon, they fall off so much on trial, that they, so far from shewing themselves even amateurs, are found to be "journeymen, and bad ones too"—they act up to their professions "so abominably."

Returning to professionals, in the ordinary phases of professions, I consider the distinctive marks to be—one who has been taught any craft by a professor, with a view to acting professionally, as a means of making an income, or adding to one. If a man has been thus qualified, but has never acted professionally, he cannot be termed a professional; though if a man may be self-

taught, and makes a living, or greatly adds to his means of living by acting professionally, he may, in many cases, be very appropriately termed a professional, for he does for pay that which professionals do.

We will come, by degrees, to sporting avocations, wherein the professional is employed. Mr. Benjamin Marshall, the animal painter (deceased), though at the top of his profession, or at all events in its first rank in his day, was never (as he has told me) professionally instructed; yet he established a new style of painting, as regards light and shade, that at the time perfectly astonished the public. Hypercriticism could not call him otherwise than professional, though not professionally taught.

I know a lady who has studied drawing from childhood, under professors, and great credit she does to her instructors; she did not study with a view to making drawing a profession; circumstances have since rendered it convenient, though not necessary, to turn her acquirement to account; at times she does so, both as regards the sale of drawings, and also in instructing. Not being publicly a professor, she may by some be still held as an amateur. I must consider her professional, as I do all who perform any professional calling for pay.

I will now touch on authors, and very ticklish gentlemen they mostly are to touch, be their usual themes what they may. Their being professionals or not, I consider, in the strict sense of the word, depends on circumstances. Lord Byron was a very voluminous author; he was paid, no doubt; but, at the same time, he was a literary nobleman of unrivalled imaginative and poetic powers, who chose to write. His afterwards selling what he had written, I do not consider made him professional. If a man is regularly engaged to write as an author, be it

in what way or on what subject it may, he is a professional author; if not, he is an individual who at times avails himself of such talent as he may possess, and makes money by it when he can. I should say, it is being in the habit of *engaging* to do a thing for pay, that makes it a profession, and the man a professional.

Now comes the tug of war—"define what is a gentleman jockey." Good reader, I shrink from such a task; for wherever and whenever we touch on the definition of a gentleman, as it affects any particular individual, or indeed class of individuals, we are pretty sure to get into a scrape, and render ourselves liable to be charged with ignorance, prejudice, partiality, or malevolence, or perhaps all together; unless in a case where, in applying the term "gentleman," or "plebeian," its appropriateness is so unequivocal as to prevent the possibility of a diversity of opinion. But although I will "touch not" either "the lords" or gentlemen "anointed," I will venture a few remarks on professional or non-professional riders as jockeys, leaving the pretensions of any and all as gentlemen, to pass the ordeal of what would be considered as authority, which what I might say perhaps would not.

I have often heard much outcry against races expressly arranged for gentlemen riders, with, I must say, I think, no clause in favour of such objection; but on the contrary, with no little probability of producing a bad effect, or, at all events, tending to prevent the progress of a good one. Such outcry as I have mentioned, I have only found raised by a certain clique, or persons entertaining similar views and wishes. Why do such so virulently abuse races ridden by gentlemen? Is it from the only objectionable feature I should bring against them, namely, that horses do certainly often get much abused from the want of skill and judgment of many such

riders? Is it this consideration that produces the wholesale anathemas brought forward against non-professional jockeys? Not a bit; the set loudest in their deprecations would see a horse cut up piecemeal, if it could promote their interest that he should be thus treated. The secret, or rather fact (for I should think it could be no secret), is where gentlemen ride in gentlemen's races: they mostly do so from a love of sport, and, no doubt, a little harmless vanity. That vanity is gratified by the dress in itself; is more gratified by the preliminary canter in sight of their friends; but immeasurably more gratified, if their horse is proclaimed a winner; which, in most cases, leads, deservedly or not, to a compliment—nay, sundry compliments to his jockey.

Aware that the desire to win is in such a man so strong, quite satisfies certain parties that the influence of money would here succumb to that of vanity, and more than all, any rascally offer made would probably ensure a kicking or horsewhipping, and consequent exposure; and as a further guarantee of the fairness of intention in such races, they are not often for sums, nor is the betting on them heavy enough to warrant a moderate independence being offered, as an inducement to risk character. Therefore, should there be a black sheep among the lot, he would not be weak enough to bleat here. Such races are therefore lost time to the "leg," who takes the time the running them occupies, as the proper one in which to take his creature comforts.

There is a further circumstance attending races to be ridden by gentlemen, which would always render betting in such events more complex than when taking place on others. This is, the quality of the riders, as to skill, judgment, and horsemanship, which varies quite as much—indeed, a vast deal more than do the pretensions

of the horses as racers; so here must come in no little handicapping of the riders.

We will suppose a Welter Cup on the eve of being run for. "What will win the Cup?" says a country gentleman, who likes to have a trifle on, be the event what it may, just to keep his mind a little on the *qui vive*. "Why," replies the friend addressed, "it will be between three of them—Tom Leadem, Contest, and Lucy Laglast." "What on earth do you mean, my good fellow?" cries the first speaker; "why, when the three ran together in the spring, for the Hunter's Stakes, at Early, Lucy was not even placed!" "Well! what odds will you bet me she don't win?" "Why, anything you like to name in reason." "I'll take twenty to one, and give you the field, including the two favourites." "You shall have it, my victim, with pleasure," cries our country friend, laughing. "Well!" replies the other, laughing in his turn, "as I am a victim, I will make up my mind to be victimized. Will you make it fivers instead of sovs.?" "I will; and now, my good fellow, do tell me what induces you to make the bet?" "Did not you see the mare run in the last race?" "I did, and saw Mr. Choke'em ride her head off." "Do you know who steers her to-morrow?" "No," says the other, "I do not." "Well then, I'll tell you. Captain Eagle-eye will be up; and now I'll turn prophet, and tell you how the race will come off: If I am not much mistaken, Tom Leadem and Contest are to be ridden by their owners, both fine horsemen across country; but this has not much to do with race-riding. Still, their horses will be well ridden, and will make a close thing of it for second place; but I know the mare is seven pounds better than either, and I'd give away seven more for the Captain to steer her; and now I'll give you a bit of advice worth the hundred

I think you may book as lost to me: Never in an amateur race attempt to judge of the merits of horses by their running, unless you well know the merits of the riders. Good-bye till to-morrow." How our prophet sped, those who can handicap amateur jockeys will judge.

There is one circumstance, and but one, that I know or can conceive, that ever has prevented gentlemen jockeys riding as well as professionals, and that is *want of practice*. This want arises from three prominent causes—want of leisure; disliking the privations necessary to keep down weight and keep up condition; and, lastly, the few amateur races there are to ride for; and, of course, the less such races are encouraged, the less opportunity for practice gentlemen have.

It will not, I trust, be supposed that I in any way would wish to see amateur races preponderate in point of number over others. Far otherwise; I only consider that a sprinkling of them among others at a race meeting has a beneficial effect, in giving meetings, where such is the case, a peculiar interest among sportsmen, quite independent of mere gambling with race-horses in lieu of dice, which is pretty much the feature of most races. It conduces to making a race-course a place of sport, and not a mere "Hell" in the open air.

We call Ascot, "par excellence," a royal and aristocratic course. It very properly holds this prestige from its being usually distinguished by the presence of Majesty; but, in point of aristocracy, I should give that merit far more to Croxton Park, where I should say that in proportion to the different numbers assembled at the two different meetings, the aristocracy preponderate by far at the latter-named meeting. I should say, more legs, sharpers, and blackguards are to be found in one day at Ascot, than in two or three years' meetings at Croxton,

solely because "locusts" will not darken by their numbers a spot where they find a scarcity of that they feed on.

Nor need gentlemen disposed to race-riding be deterred from doing so, under the supposition that to ride a race well, it is necessary that they should have passed the ordeal of several years as exercise boy. Riding exercise alone would never make a jockey; riding trials is the practice that renders a lad capable of riding a race. I hold it quite necessary that to make a man a perfect general horseman, he should begin at a very early age; a very short time gives such a younker a sufficiently good racing seat. It is trials that teach pace and the capabilities of the race-horse; these teach him when distress begins: riding exercise will not; for at such work a horse should not feel distress, however strong the work. It is the quickness of perception when a horse is in a state to be made use of, or when he must be eased (and this sometimes occurs more than once or twice in a race), that constitutes one of the great niceties of riding a race; and riding trials and races will alone and only do this; and as I have no hesitation in saying, a cultivated mind will learn this much quicker than ignorance: the gentleman needs not the long practice of the exercise lad, to become a very fair jockey; and I am quite clear that a certain portion of the plain part of the education of the gentleman would greatly accelerate the progress of the boy in becoming a reflective, intelligent, and accomplished jockey. People talk a great deal of the qualities of jockeys, as to their style of riding, and each has his admirers. There can be no doubt that a jockey, to be perfect, should be a fine horseman; but I must observe that we have no jockey among those who are worthy the name, that cannot, as a horseman, ride well enough to win races; but it is the faculty of combining circumstances, calculating

their effects—quickness of discernment, presence of mind in difficulty, and promptness of decision and action in availing himself of casualties in the race he rides for, that makes the perfect master of his profession. These qualities emanate from the head. Very long practice acts as a substitute for the want of early information; but where the qualities of the head give one man a decided advantage over another in any craft, the earlier and the better furnished the head is, the sooner and the most decidedly will one man become superior to the other in whatever the two may undertake. Poor Arthur Pavis was a very successful jockey, no doubt; for this he was greatly indebted to the weight he could ride. No one will accuse Pavis of great powers of reflection, or of possessing great sense; yet it may be said he could ride, and ride to win. He could so; but though he rode well enough for any man as a horseman, he would have been a far better jockey if he had had a head, or one with anything in it. Had not circumstances, more than his actual merits, afforded him opportunity to be a successful jockey, he would have been only considered a very coxcombical, self-sufficient simpleton. We laughed at, but could not help admiring poor little Arthur. We never laughed at, but always did and always must, so long as the recollection of a jockey remains, respect and admire Jim Robinson. With Pavis up, with boys to ride against (an advantage he so frequently got), we could reasonably calculate on the result. Put him against veterans, that result became very doubtful. With Robinson up, we were pretty sure, if the race was in his horse's powers, the race would be his. All jockeys have heels—Robinson, and a few others, have heads; and such are the only men that, in the long run, are to be depended on. May I hope the reader will take this in support of my hypothe-

sis—that to make a perfect jockey, we should begin by making a well-informed man. A very old jockey has happened to call on me while concluding this portion of these sheets; I have read them to him. "You are quite right, master," says the veteran. So with the suffrage of my old acquaintance, I will quit amateurs and professionals as jocks, and turn to them in other guise.

AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL HUNTSMEN.

"Ah!" cries the fox-hunter, "here seems something more in my 'line of country,' than Pavises, Robinsons, and men of whom I know nothing, and for whom I care less." So be it, good reader; "*chacun à son goût, soit-il bon, soit-il mauvais.*" But, good reader, it may turn out that the line of country I shall take may be widely different from such as you have been accustomed to, and, in many particulars, far from what you may consider a good one. You may consider I am "running riot," and all I may get from you is "a rate" instead of a cheer. However, I must risk it, and having "settled to my game," I must not now "run mute."

Although, as it is said in the play, in most things "much may be said on both sides," no man can conscientiously and effectively uphold two opposite doctrines, or, in more vulgar parlance, "blow hot and blow cold;" so I hope to at least nail the opinion of my reader to one side or other of the argument.

Most persons are enthusiastic in their statements of the niceties, beauties, and difficulties of any pursuit they particularly admire. The cricketer will expatiate for an hour together on the splendid specimen of batting or bowling exhibited by somebody on a particular day—nay, will speak in all but rapture of the way in which the seventh or any other ball in such an innings was disposed

of; he will tell you it takes many years' private and public practice to make a finished cricketer. So be it; he therefore admits by this, that much valuable time has been consumed in such practice. I therefore nail his admission of this fact.

The player of that still more difficult and intricate game "tennis" will tell you the same thing.

Perhaps it would take the third of a life to make such a violinist as Paganini was; and, as a professional man, that great artist did right and well in devoting all his time and energies of mind to his vocation. He wished to become the first violinist of his day, and I suppose succeeded. Now, playing the violin scientifically, and in a masterly way, is an accomplishment that any nobleman, so far from being ashamed, may well be proud of, if to be achieved leaving ample time for the cultivation of other parts of education and other accomplishments fitting the position of a nobleman, and consequently man of fashion, and, we will suppose, man of sense. Now comes the plain state of the case: It either does require the devotion of many years of a man's life to become an accomplished violinist, or it does not. I think this nails the fact to one side or other. If it does not require an undue proportion of time to learn the instrument, the noble would be quite right in making it a part of his studies. If it really does require as many years as enthusiastic violinists avow it does, to acquire proficiency, quære, could not the nobleman find higher pursuits to occupy so much of his time than becoming a fiddler?

Enthusiastic fox-hunters will say, that to become a perfect huntsman, a man should, figuratively, be born in a kennel. That is, a kennel should be among his first associations of ideas; that he should be conversant with all the routine of kennel management and kennel dis-

cipline; he should be entered, like the young hounds, cub-hunting; go through the gradations of riding second horse, acting as second, then first whip, and then, after many years' practice in these several vocations, he may, if an intelligent man, aspire to the situation of huntsman; which finished step attained, he will still require some years' practice to become a finished artist, in the profession in which he has spent probably the half of his allotted life.

We will now "hark back" a little, and see why it is necessary a huntsman should go through such initiatory probation to quality him for his ostensible and really arduous situation; for I quite agree with my brother fox-hunters in their opinion that it is so; and having mostly found fox-hunters as straightforward fellows out of the field as in, I have no fear of their dodging about and attempting to qualify an opinion once given, because they might find that in a particular case or circumstance, they had got into something like "a hole," by having unequivocally stated it.

The huntsman should be introduced to the kennel as a boy, to give his mind a bias towards fox-hunting in a general way. Secondly, to thoroughly learn that most indispensable part of a huntsman's business, namely, the management of hounds in kennel; for unless well managed there, it is quite certain they will be unfit—nay, unable to perform their duties in the field. He should learn to consider the condition, breeding, and pedigree of a fox-hound to be of as much importance as an owner or trainer holds that of a race-horse; he should learn to consider a fox-hound as the finest animal living, and to become a huntsman the most important aim of life. He should go out cub-hunting, to give him a love of hunting; but further to teach him the different con-

duct of young, untutored hounds, and that of the old hunting ones, who want no one to tell them their business. He will further, in cub-hunting, learn the different hunting terms and halloas, and the appropriate circumstances under which each is used; it will teach him to get himself and horse quickly through covers, and to get hounds also quickly through it to the huntsman's horn or halloa, when such duty may devolve upon him as whip; and finally, it will teach him to judge of what hounds are about when he cannot see them.

He should ride second horse for somebody, to make him a horseman, teach him to cross country at as little expenditure of the animal powers of his horse as possible; and as it will not be his present business to tie himself to the line of the pack, it will teach him the points foxes usually make for, under ordinary circumstances, in the country where he expects to hunt; and by learning the habits of his game in general, he will learn the most probable and ready way to recover hounds in any country, when particular circumstances may have caused them to slip him, or his duty as second-whip may have compelled him to remain behind the field.

Of his duties in the field as second-whip I need say nothing here; if he is of quick apprehension and anxious to learn, he will pretty well inform himself of these while riding second horse.

First-whip is, indeed, a most important post to hold in a fox-hunting establishment—one extremely difficult to effectively fill. So much of the sport of each day depends on the quickness of act and thought in the first-whip, that he cannot take too much pains to make himself perfect in his most arduous duty. He should be perfectly capable of hunting the pack himself, but must practise the self-denial of never attempting to do so, unless from

any particular circumstance the huntsman should happen to be so far behind as to render the waiting his coming up likely to mar the day's sport; the first-whip may then very properly take upon himself the temporary duty of huntsman, till his head and chief comes up.

The first-whip being the disciplinarian of the pack, if I kept hounds one of the chief qualities I should make a point that he possessed, would be *good temper*. I would do so for humanity's sake, as regards the animals subject to his discipline; and I would do so from the conviction that an irritable savage as first-whip would risk the spoiling any pack of foxhounds in the kingdom; for where a man lets his bad temper blind his judgment, hounds will frequently get punished when they know not for what the punishment is inflicted, consequently will be as likely to be awed from doing right as wrong. The high blood and temper, and natural boldness of the fox-hound, must be kept in due bounds; but he must not be cowed, or his fine spirit broken; for destroy the dash of the fox-hound, and his great characteristic will be gone—he will become timid, morose, or sulky, and consequently worthless.

A man having gone through the ordeal I have in a summary way described, may fairly feel himself qualified to commence his career as a huntsman, in whose duties practice only will render him perfect.

I would not say it would be absolutely objectionable to make a man huntsman to the same pack to which he had acted as first-whip, but I would rather prefer a man who had not done so. It is true, he would have the recommendation of knowing the hounds, and the merits and demerits of each of them—no small advantage, I admit; but against this the hounds know him, and will not readily forget the discipline they have experienced at his hands; they should, and mostly do, love their hunts-

man; they fear, and in many cases, hate the first-whip as a supposed enemy; and it will be long ere they gain sufficient confidence to dash up with alacrity to the halloa or cheer of a voice from which they have so often heard a rate, or readily trust to the encouragement of one under whose lash they have so often cowered. We may awe a hound from hunting wrong game, skirting, lagging in cover, or even heedlessly rushing on when not certain he is on the line of his game; but we cannot flog or rate a hound into hunting. We may force a horse into the water, or a hound into cover; but we cannot *make* the one drink or the other hunt—both are voluntary acts. Hounds, to hunt with alacrity and attention, should at the time feel their spirits buoyant, their actions free, and their labour cheered by a voice they are accustomed to listen to with pleasure and confidence.

As I am in no way attempting a treatise on hunting, I have said enough for my purpose, if I have, as I trust is the case, shewn the numerous qualities required in a huntsman, and consequently the time it must occupy to learn his manifold duties and qualifications.

Now comes the consideration of the prudence of a man taking on himself the character of Amateur Huntsman.

That every man has a perfect right to follow the bent of his inclinations, where they are neither criminal nor absolutely wrong, no one would attempt to deny. We then come to the question as to how far the thus following them is to his credit or not; and, in deciding such question, we must not be guided, or even influenced by the particular opinion of a particular clique, but by the opinions of men in general, of good sense and good taste; for it is the suffrages of such we presume a man would wish to gain. As regards, then, our question in

hand, namely, "how far, under ordinary circumstances, it is in a general way judicious in a gentleman to act the part of huntsman," we will not ask the opinion of professional huntsmen, for we are quite sure what that opinion would be; we will not seek that of one who occasionally eschews the streets of London for a gallop with fox-hounds, for his opinion for or against would not be worth having. We will not ask that of a man who does not hunt at all, so knows nothing of hunting or hounds; nor of one who knows all about both, but knows nothing or little else; but we will zealously seek, and would with confidence be guided by the opinion of him whom we could recognise as a man of sense, a thorough sportsman, and at the same time a man of education and a perfect gentleman; I can but fancy he would say, that "take it on the broad scale, the gentleman would be the least likely to subject himself to unpleasantry and animadversion, who abstained from taking upon himself the office of amateur huntsman to a pack of fox-hounds."

A gentleman hunting his harriers is quite a different affair; he keeps them for his own amusement and that of his friends and acquaintance; his field is not usually numerous. If he is not extremely self-sufficient, he will probably leave his hounds a good deal to themselves, in which case he will most likely get fair average sport. If he commits an error that a professional huntsman would not have done, no one in the shape of a gentleman would be rude enough to attempt to ridicule, or make offensive remarks on the circumstance; he is virtually a gentleman, taking his morning ride with the pleasing accompaniment of his pack of hounds, instead of doing the same thing without them. No one can condemn his taste.

If of more enthusiastic temperament, without pretending to keep an established pack, a man's taste induces him to exchange his twenty couple of harriers for a moderate pack of fox-hounds, and with a couple or three hunters for himself, and two good screws for his single whip, he hunts fox twice a week; he does not place himself in any objectionably ostensible situation in hunting his little scratch pack, and in proportion to the number of days he hunts during the season, may probably enough shew a very sporting number of noses at the end of it. He is nearly in the same position as a gentleman hunting his harriers; the chief difference being, the one hunts hare, the other fox.

We now come to the amateur taking upon himself the management and the hunting an established pack of fox-hounds, hunting three or four days a week, his fixtures made public, so as to ensure a large field—an arduous and truly hazardous undertaking for any one; how far more so then for a gentleman! Nor let him flatter himself that in so ostensible a situation, his being held as a gentleman will shield him from ridicule, and even rudeness, if he performs his office inefficiently; on the contrary, his self-estimation will be met with sarcasm by the higher class of his field, and the *gentleman huntsman* will be certain to challenge obloquy, rudeness, and probably impertinence, on the part of the lower.

I might be asked, why I consider it by no means objectionable, the gentleman acting the part of amateur jockey, yet so injudicious his performing or attempting to perform that of amateur huntsman? I judge on these premises: We may reasonably suppose no man would contemplate riding a race who had not from practice become a good general horseman, and (unless the business of a huntsman is over-rated in point of

difficulty) one-twentieth part of the time requisite to qualify a man to hunt a pack of fox-hounds, would make a man, already a horseman, a quite sufficiently good jockey to ride an amateur race well; even if he does not, he mars the sport of no one, consequently calls forth no disappointed expectations from any one; whereas the errors of the huntsman call forth remark, and also anathemas, often both loud and deep, from a whole field —from which Gods of the Chase deliver us!

A gentleman hunting his harriers or private pack of fox-hounds is about on a footing with another who drives his four-in-hand. Hunting an established pack is, as it were, making himself body coachman. The question therefore merges into this, "Is it worth a gentleman's while to devote half a life to qualify himself to do that which, probably, after all, a servant would do quite as well, or better?" If a man is content with the praises of a few boon companions, or a number of uneducated bruising yeoman riders, let him learn the duties of a huntsman to the neglect of higher attainments, and much good may his taste do him! But if he wishes to be admired by those whose admiration is worth having, let him keep his fox-hounds by all means; but let his huntsman hunt them. There is no reason *then* why he should not shine in the drawing-room at night as an accomplished man, as much as he did as a fine sportsman and fine horseman in the morning. But I much fear, yet say it with diffidence, that if a man has devoted enough of his time to the kennel and management of hounds to be held as a *perfect* huntsman, he runs no small risk of being estimated by men of education, fashion, and taste, as but a somewhat *imperfect* gentleman.

RED COATS AND SILK JACKETS.

If, or when it is found, by those who write on any subject, that a little scepticism is indulged in by those who read, as to the representations made, writers are no little prone to at once set up their bristles, sometimes show their teeth, and eke sometimes to make a determined snap at the (so estimated) offender. And should the estimated culprit happen to be one of the same clique, we can often detect visible indications of a strong inclination to lay hold, and not only hold, but to shake in true rat-pit style. Rats have, however, pretty sharp teeth; and it is only very superior dogs, and very clever dogs, who can worry them, and come off themselves unscathed. It is fortunate for writers of a moderate class, that they, like the rats, have teeth also; otherwise the clever dogs of critics would be ever waging war against them.

Now, this is all very wrong, and very unjust, for "live and let live," though a homily, is really an amiable sentiment; and "let him who is faultless fling the first stone." If such a maxim was strictly adhered to, no such missile would ever be launched. If, as I conceive, such figurative flinging of stones be wrong, so is it foolish, or at least weak, to, as I have stated, set up one's bristles because others may differ in opinion from ourselves: when such difference does not arise from any circum-

stance that is reprehensible in either party, overweening vanity may call for castigation at the hands of the critic; the promulgation of absurdity, his just reprehension; or an attempt to undervalue that which is estimated as proper by men of sense, his pity. But a harmless difference of taste and inclination, where each is equally estimable and gentlemanly, may very properly be good-naturedly descanted on, but criticism is uncalled for.

However much a man may be disposed, or in his own mind determined, to argue or write on any favourite subject with impartiality, he will find (or, if not, others will find it out for him) that he will, imperceptibly to himself, represent the *pour* in glowing colours, while the *contre* is so slightly touched as to be all but imperceptible. It will be just the same if he compares any favoured pursuit with one to which he is more indifferent; and in any case where he treats on his favourite passion, and at the same time on one for which he has no predilection, I fear it will be found, that his partial view of the two subjects will lead him into very considerable error. Hence, though a man of allowed talent, good sense, good taste, and intended justness of decision and argument, he may be severely and justly criticised, or, more properly speaking, his writing on such particular subjects may; yet he has no right to "set up his bristles:" the man, the author, or the writer, is not personally attacked—his mistakes and partial representations only are corrected. We all run occasionally into such errors. So, if the lash is shown us, or if we even get a touch of it, it would be bad feeling to show our teeth,—worse policy to attempt to bite. The best thing is to take to our heels, and laughingly allow that we have come pretty well off; for should we snarl, woe be to us the next time when caught tripping.

I once saw the good effects of something of similar conduct in a fox-hound. He had somewhat of a sweet tooth, relished a bit of *currant jelly*, if he could surreptitiously get hold of it; in other respects faultless. Jasper had been indulging, in cover, in a little mute chase of the fur. Unfortunately for him, out bolted puss, close to where the whip and I were standing, and out came Jasper, all but upon her. Will threw himself off his horse, and called the hound to him. Whether the culprit thought his doings had not been seen, or hoped to evade anger by humility, I know not; but he came, put his two paws on the whip's body, and looked blandly up in his face. "D—m thee! I meant to give thee a good hiding," says Will; "but I can't now." So he contented himself with, "What are you at here, eh? Goo, hark in," and the sounding smack of the thong told Jasper (who was not long in taking the hint) what he had escaped.

"Sic parvis componere magna solebam."

In taking up my present subject, I am at least under no apprehension of being influenced by particular predilection on the one side or the other; for if the scarlet coat and cover side have power to rouse my every energy of mind and body into action,—if the cheering horn, or rattling tally-ho, thrills through every nerve,—so the silken jacket, the thronged race-course, the bell (where there is one), and the "They're off!" causes a tingle that extends to my very finger-ends. If the somewhat stalwart body of Tom Hills, or the neat person of Charles Payne, can call forth anticipations of the glories of a burst and a kill, if a kill be possible, so does the black jacket of Frank Butler, or the spotted one of Charles Marlow, ensure the seeing a race handsomely won, if it is in the

horse to win it. I will not disparage either pursuit by putting steeple-chasing on a level with them; but who can see Black Tom's whiskered, and really handsome countenance, and not remember the numberless stirring scenes in which he has been engaged through a life that, judging by the escapes he has had, we might hold as a "charmed" one?

Riding in the outskirts of Dublin, my horse shied, and thus threw himself over a very low wall, into some ground excavated for houses. The fall was at least twelve feet. An Irishman ran up—"Are ye much hurt, Sir?" "Not at all," said I, shaking my feathers. "Then, by Jasus! you'll never be kilt by a fall with a horse." Ten times more might it be said to Oliver.

I have said, I do not fear writing partially in alluding to either of the subjects I have taken up. It may be hinted, that I may not write judiciously on either. This I admit as very possible; some may add—as very probable. Be it so. If it turns out to be the case, I shall bear in mind what I have said about smiling at the lash. So here goes to do my best.

If an argument was to be general among the patrons of the coat and the jacket, and it was put to a show of hands, Which, on the whole, most contributes to the good of the country, hunting or racing? I can figure to my imagination what a pretty Babel of voices we should hear! what a countless exhibition of digits we should see! No doubt the four conditions proposed to the late Emperor of All the Russias may be, and doubtless are, of more paramount interest to Europe; but the enthusiasm that will be shown by the representatives of their different nations will be tameness personified, to what would be evinced by partisans of the coats against jackets, and jackets against coats. "What's it to us,"

cries the huntsman, "whether the Turks or the Roosians keep Betsy Rabier? It's of more consequence to the country whether Winnington Gorse is to be my Lord's or Sir Thomas's, or whether it's to be nootral."

"I do not care a dem," cries a natty little jockey, taking his cigar from his mouth, "whether the Sultan or the Czar wins, or whether they run a dead heat; but I'd back the Sultan for choice, for I lost a ride by our not running for the Vase last year."

But talk to either, of the merits of their separate vocations—

"Then what a noise, hurrah, loud laugh, low gibe, and bitter joke!"

Without being quite as indifferent to circumstances on which depends the fate of nations as the characters alluded to, or considering it a matter of national importance to whom Winnington Gorse is handed over, or even giving a thought to the Emperor's Vase, we may be permitted to hold a predilection for the hunting-coat and racing-jacket —both to be upheld, as keeping up certain characteristics of our country and Englishmen. We will not pretend to say, that athletic sports can make a hero; nor do they in any way contribute to make a man a soldier, so far as military tactics are concerned; but they unquestionably contribute to produce the stuff that has stood us in good stead when opposed to those of more military habits and inclinations. It is the hardy frame, and bull-dog courage of the Englishman, that enable him to cope with superior military tuition. It is this particular species of courage and determination that at hand-to-hand, bayonet-to-bayonet work, causes the superiority of the English soldier to be seen. And this is the only position in which he does shine conspicuously.

Supposing that field sports thus do tend to render us

hardy and manly, it may be alleged that racing can tend but little towards such advantages. We must admit this, as comparing it with more athletic pursuits. It has, however, to say the least of it, this all but negative virtue,—it frequently leads to the other sports that do; and, if it did not, it is far better, more healthy, and more manly, than the exclusive devotion to London evening amusements, in which those indulge who have no sporting propensity about them.

"What are the advantages that the country in general derives from our hunting and racing propensities?" I can fancy I hear many a keen fox-hunter exclaim, "It derives hundreds of advantages from hunting, and is only robbed by racing." A sweeping allegation, truly—I should rather say *untruly*, for such assertion could only be made under the influence of prejudice and error. It is pleasing to find a man enthusiastic in the praise of a favourite of any kind, if a commendable one; but it is not equally desirable that he should be as enthusiastic in decrying that which may not equally challenge his particular attention or pursuit. Let us, in what we say, give as fair a meed of praise to each of the subjects in hand as our judgment will permit. We will not wade through the hundreds of advantages mentioned by our supposed enthusiast, as derived from fox-hunting, but mention a few of the leading ones; setting in opposition, or rather in comparison, those derived from turf pursuits.

Hunters were from the earliest ages proverbially a hardy and manly race, and in many countries necessarily a brave and daring class. The man who would lure the lion from his den, or trace the tiger to his lair, cannot be supposed to fear any mortal foe. We have neither the necessity, nor opportunity, of putting a similar exhibition of daring to the test in this country; but in our

venatic pursuits, though we have nothing to fear from the game we seek for our chase, still, if we are foremost in the fray, we are called on to exhibit an indifference to hurts or dangers that are quite sufficient to keep the craven ones at home, or, if not, at such distance as to be nearly the same thing. Very shy riders may excuse themselves,—some by saying they do not like the exertion of riding boldly; others may aver, they think it foolish to risk their persons in such a cause; and depend upon it, all—ay, the rankest coward that ever stepped—will insinuate, that in *other* particulars they are men of unflinching courage. Many may be, and doubtless are so; and, when we know they are, we will give them credit for it, and, if they do ride shy, we will impute it to the cause they allege. But we should find such instances rare. And the real truth is, that nine out of ten are afraid—that is the honest term—and the truth is, that he who may possibly be a bold man on other occasions, is in this instance afraid also. Thus we may fairly infer, that if even in our chase, to do the thing well requires nerve and daring, and many cannot, will not, or dare not show such, the chase is at least a nursery for daring enterprise.

We may be told, that racing is no such nursery for stout hearts. We must admit it. But a very timid man would make but a very sad jockey. Many a spicy young gentleman—whose highest aspiration is to be invited to a rout, and who would very soon be put to one if danger were in the way—may think he would look very interesting if in Marson's place, taking a preliminary canter. He would create a great deal of interest, no doubt, in such a situation; a good deal more surprise, and still more ridicule. But such—and all gentlemen not conversant with race-horses and race-riding—should be told, that

getting on a half-wild, and perhaps viciously-disposed two-year-old, does not only require some, but a good deal of nerve, that they would probably fail to exhibit, even in defence of the fair Georgiana, in whose eyes he is an *untried* hero. Nor is the riding, surrounded and followed by a host of determined three-year-olds, a service unattended with danger; and, in case of a fall, the hoofs of a dozen racehorses following, are likely to produce as dire a catastrophe as those of a squadron of an enemy's dragoons. Thus, it will be perceived, the career of the jockey is not, in point of absence of danger, *all silk*.

The chase—in point of the promotion and continuance of health—is, as its patrons may and do say, "worth twenty doctors." We admit it: render it the just tribute of (all but) ensuring a hale constitution, strengthening a weak, and repairing a shattered one. "Throw physic to the dogs;" to which an old friend of mine used to add, "and follow the hounds"—he at eighty-four—"Bravo fox-hunting!"

It in no way deteriorates the merit of any one thing, that there is merit also in another; and the life of the jockey satisfies us that health is confined to no one regime. Habit will render that healthful to one man that would be death to another. The fox-hunter eats and drinks what he pleases, and works hard; the jockey works equally hard, at times harder, and neither in quality nor quantity takes what he would wish: yet both are in health. The foxhunter is robust, the jockey thin as his frame will allow; the former looks the picture of health, the latter often as if he had risen from a bed of sickness. Your hunting friend gives you a grasp from a hand that makes your own tingle to the fingers' end: the jockey presents one semi-transparent, with the knuckles and tendons sharply developed as the head and

strings of a violin. The foxhunter throws physic to the dogs: the jockey throws Epsom or Glauber salts down his throat as a kind of a natural summer morning beverage. The foxhunter half consumes in summer heat (to which he is no friend), though clad in the lightest vestments he can find: the jockey puts on his worsted stockings, a couple of pair of flannel drawers, two under-waistcoats of the same material, his coat, and an over-one. The former sits still as much as he can, and drinks iced beverages: the jockey walks his three or four miles out and in, takes a hot drink, and, while the former cools himself at a window, the latter calls for blankets, and sends forth perspiration like a squeezed sponge. The two disciples of the field and turf meet: the former puffing and blowing at the heat like a grampus; the latter with his top-coat on, cool as a cucumber, after his sweat, his only anxiety being, whether he has "got enough off." The foxhunter (if of the old school) d—ns tea: the jockey drinks it, wishing he could indulge in more. The hunter takes a chop or (in his opinion, better still) a steak at breakfast, takes his glass of ale, and in his heart toasts fox-hunting: the jockey takes his dry toast, and not much of that. Somewhat different these modes of living; yet each lives: and I believe it to be fact, that on the average the one lives as long, though not as well as the other. But the Houghton over, now comes our abstemious hero's turn. A fresh supply of wine and other good things are placed in his cellar for the winter campaign; three weeks fill up the sunken cheeks, the limbs become rounded, and he stands out a well-proportioned, close-knit, little fellow, ready for any fun or devilry that presents itself.

The trainer next comes within our mind's eye. He is

a very different personage to the jockey, though both are equally important in carrying out racing affairs. The jockey cannot, under *ordinary* circumstances, make a horse win unless he is well trained; and no one can make the jockey try to win unless his honesty and inclination induce him to do so under *any* circumstances. The trainer is very commonly a stout, athletic man, unless it be in cases when he was originally a jockey, and then the change of his mode of living makes so great a one in the man, that to name him and a silk jacket together, as connected with each other, would appear as incongruous as to mention a cob and a two-and-a-half pound saddle. Who, in the comfortable-looking personage of Dockeray, could recognise one of the neatest jockeys that formerly rode over the turf; proverbial as he was for a most racing-like seat, and hands that were perfection? Time has not stood still since I saw him ride his father's filly, Honeysuckle, at Ascot, at, I guess, about or under six stone.

Few men indulge in better living than trainers: and if the head is clear enough at night to enable the body to rise willingly early in the morning, it matters not how they live. The care of race-horses in no way calls for abstinence in all the functionaries employed; which any one would be quite aware of, who had seen a lot of riding-boys at breakfast after two hours on the downs. One thing is, however, indispensably necessary in all employed about race-horses, if they mean to succeed in their several vocations; this is sobriety: and to do such persons justice, they do, as a class, deviate from such conduct less than most others. Now and then we see an exception; and not long since we saw its fatal consequences in a jockey and trainer, now no more, who, but for that besetting sin, would have lived and died a

very wealthy man. There is, therefore, some moral tendency in racing: we could wish there was more. In answer to the "bravo fox-hunting!" a page or so back, as racing conduces as much as it to health, and certainly far more as a necessity to sobriety, we may fairly say, "Well done, silk jacket!"

Hunting, no doubt, has, ever since horses became necessary accessories to the chase, greatly conduced to the improved breed we now possess. What those formerly indigenous to our island were, we have no means of judging. Pictures certainly show, or have attempted to show, the kind in use at the time such were painted; but Landseer, Herring, or Cooper, did not exist then; so for the truthfulness of representation we have no guarantee. If their style of gallop was such as represented, hunters would never have been wanted if Meux and Co. had then lived and had a horse to dispose of. But trusting, as I doubt not we may, to portraits of horses before an Arab or Persian horse had been imported, our ancestors had somehow contrived to manufacture for themselves a very good, useful sort of wear-and-tear hunter, with quite speed enough in the gallop for all purposes in the field as hunting then was, and more than the state of the then roads enabled them to exhibit in the trot. We certainly have changed things since those days most wonderfully; must allow we have improved them: yet does the noble, baronet, squire, and peasant see more happy faces around him than he did in those days? No one can solve this myth; but this any one can say, "We see plenty of long faces now."

We need scarcely say how much the improved stamp of hunter altered our harness, road, and troop horses—that is, improved them as regards modern taste; for the old stump-tailed carriage-horse took the family to church

or theatre just as comfortably, if not so fast, as does the more lathy bang-tailed baroucher, and possibly, to unprejudiced eyes, was as fine an animal. We certainly altered, say improved, our cavalry horses; and for a time we felt the benefit of it, and boasted enough about it. This was not permitted to last long. Our continental neighbours were far too astute to leave us long in our glory; they very soon overtook us, improved their breed quite as fast as we had done ours, and, in sooth, now have taken the boast out of us as to our superiority. We may still boast of our stud-grooms in hunting stables; but they beat us as grooms in cavalry ones. But it would be really unreasonable to expect the son of an Earl, who only purchases his commission in a cavalry regiment for the style of the thing and wearing the splendid jacket—it would, I say, be unreasonable to expect him to interest himself about the dem'd troop-stables. If the service is made disagreeable to him, or bodes to become so, he can sell out: such things have happened. Why should he not? Why should he submit to ungentlemanly exertions, or, still greater horror on horrors, ungentlemanly personal deprivation? He in no shape depends on his profession as a provision: it is only poor devils whom nobody knows, who do; it is very well for them to make themselves *au fait* of all that may be necessary in the war field; it is enough if such persons and the sergeants know all this; and fortunate for the service it is that they usually do. When such plebeian knowledge and work is wanted, it is quite time for the aristocrat to cut the army. Whether in doing so they will be cut, depends on who, not what they are.

Hunting has also its part in furnishing a superior breed of horses. Now let us see what racing has done for us in this particular. It is racing that keeps up the

kind of horse that custom and change of taste have now rendered it *necessary* we should have. It is racing that keeps in use the number of thorough-bred sires we possess; and it is half, three parts, and nearer still, to thorough-bred mares with such sires, as keep us supplied with the description of horse now in use. We are quite aware that, except for racing purposes, quite thorough-bred horses are not necessary, nor would such in a general way be desirable or useful for general purposes; but without the thorough-bred we could not keep up the sort that are. It may be said, that thorough-bred horses, or those as nearly so as we get them, are not necessary for hunters. They are not necessary for hunting, I admit; but then hunting must return to what it was; but while we do pursue our present system, as regards hunting and other purposes to which we apply horses, the thorough-bred is necessary; and without racing to stimulate us to keep up the breed, there can be little doubt but it would degenerate.

In point of circulation of money, and the consumption of commodity grown by the farmer, hunting is really important in a national point of view. Somewhere about a hundred packs of fox-hounds, and numberless packs of harriers of all sorts and grades, create an enormous demand for hay, oats, oatmeal, and other etceteras, and cause money to change hands in the most beneficial way—that is, in a general way from the rich to the less affluent. It may be said by the anti-sporting community, if the demand for hay, oats, beans, and meal was less, the farmer would grow more food for man. This would probably be the case: I am not conversant enough with commercial tactics to give a satisfactory opinion of what would be the result of such

change; but I should infer that, so long as there was any opening for export, the farmer would not permit us at home to benefit much by his extra growth of human food; if so, no one would benefit. As a very rough guess, we will suppose fifty individuals are constantly—some frequently—seen with each pack of foxhounds: if, on an average, each keeps two extra horses for hunting purposes, this gives ten thousand horses as hunters: we will average fifteen horses for the master, huntsman, and whip's use—giving 1,500 more: thus we get 11,500, exclusive of hunters used with harriers.

Racing can in no way, in this point of utility, be compared with hunting; for I should say, in equally rough guess, that taking horses in training, yearlings breaking, foals, dams, and sires, something like three thousand horses used for, destined for, and kept on racing speculation, are quite as many as we could calculate upon. So their consumption of agricultural produce becomes, in comparison, trifling; but then racing has a strong pull in another way. There are something like a couple of hundred places as recognised, or, as we may term others, bye-places, where racing takes place; and during such meetings, the sums spent in the aggregate baffles calculation. Where many places give their (near) £2,000 added, many others various minor sums, their estimation of the benefits the locality derives from and during the meetings must be large indeed. There the sums that change hands from betting (the consequence of racing) must be most enormous. If this went all in the right direction—that is, from him who does not want it to him who does, or from the man of pleasure and fortune to the trader, then indeed the silk jacket would be in the ascendant, and bear the palm

from the scarlet coat; but it unfortunately usually goes from one noble to another, or, we fear, from the noble to the "leg." Still, so far as a circulating medium, it does good; for it enables the "leg" to spend money, and he who receives it, derives as much benefit from it as if it came from worthier hands. Racing has again another claim to our approval—the number of persons of different grades and ages it employs. We will suppose in huntsmen, whips, feeders, and grooms, each fox-hunting establishment on an average employs ten men. The different training stables in riding, and extra boys employed in them, are not very far from two thousand, and those of a size and age that would incapacitate them from gaining their own living in other ways. These are all well-fed, lodged, and clothed, and, for their trifling wants, well paid; necessity and habit produce in them orderly habits; they are out of the reach of bad precepts and example, and they have before them, if their conduct is good, the prospect of becoming head lads, jockeys, or, eventually, trainers: it is true all cannot become such—some from want of a peculiar racing acumen, others from growing out of size, and others from other causes; but if their conduct has been good, they seldom fail in getting recommendations that procure them comfortable situations of some sort.

We will—for we must—admit that racing opens a field for nefarious speculation (perhaps the honester term might be robbery), and that steeple-chasing is chiefly put to such purpose; but we might as well say, that no living game should be allowed to exist, because there are poachers, as that racing as a sport should be denied because there are "legs." There is nothing in this world perfect; therefore anything that on the whole

is a national benefit, well merits the strenuous support of the nation that derives benefit from it.

Much more may be said in favour both of the scarlet coat and silk jacket: my allotted space prevents my entering into it. I doubt not our friend Cecil, who sometimes writes enthusiastically, and always well on hunting subjects, could bring forward many advantages derived from hunting that I have not mentioned; if so, we could not well have them from authority more to be confided in on such subject; and should the Druid bring forward points equally favourable to racing, I shall be content to fall back into the shade, and give place to one who can handle the subject more artistically than myself.

There was a time when the fox-hunter could not mention racing and racing men but in terms of contempt and reprobation: those old times of old prejudices are gone by, and the fox-hunter and the racing man are now often found in the same person. The noble or gentleman with a stud of hunters, during the hunting season, is seen as an amateur donning the silk in summer, and steers his own, or his friend's horse, often to victory when opposed even by professionals: this is cheering to the heart of the general sportsman when he sees it; and the true sportsman, though he may prefer one sport to another, is ever ready to promote all sport where it is in his power to do so, and with equal warmth grasps the hand of fox or hare hunter, courser, or shot, and if any little good-natured raillery takes place as regards the particular predilection of each, its result is, that each brings forward so many circumstances in favour of his favourite sport, that each becomes more favourably impressed with the pleasures derivable from the pursuit of the other.

Hunting and racing may be considered as twin sports ; and if, from improper admixture of persons, one does present one unfavourable feature that the other does not, let the patrons of both unite to rectify this one baneful effect, while heart and hand they join in support of the good cause.

HINTS ON COACHMANSHIP.

"Sunt quos curriculo."

Some time since, an article or two of mine, that I am told caused a laugh on the part of some of its readers, appeared in a popular sporting journal. That article was entitled "Hints on Horsemanship."

Now as the circulation of *Bell's Life in London* extends more or less to every part of the civilized world, if a man can hope he has created a laugh at Cape Capricorn and Sierra Leone, Okotsk and Van Dieman's Land, it is no small inducement to his making another effort in the same cause by another article, in the same style, though on another subject.

In the "Hints" alluded to, I mentioned different failings in the horse as to action and habits, the correction or palliation of which depended chiefly on the rider. Now there are two ways of giving advice and instruction —if doing either is our intention—namely, the grave or the ridiculous mode. For instance, if we thought it would be judicious in a man standing six-feet-four in his shoes to accustom himself to stoop on going under doorways, we might advise him to do so by stating the probability of his pericranium suffering if he did not: or we might advise him to make it a point on such occasions to draw

himself up to his fullest height, for then *if* he knocked down the top of the door-case, it would save him the trouble of stooping in passing that particular door again. But, better than this, we might tell him that if instead of walking upright he ran with all his force equally upright, he might also carry away some of the superincumbent wall as well as the top of the door-case; and, seeing the havoc he made, all doors where he was likely to pass would be heightened to prevent such an occurrence, and he would all but to a certainty never have occasion to stoop at any door-way in future, a circumstance that would be the probable result of his having made a battering-ram of his head. If the head did recover the shock, probably the practical lesson would have more effect than all the wordy advice we could give. If he had common sense enough to see the meaning of the advice jocose, laughed at, but took the hint, we should have the pleasure of knowing we had created a moment's amusement and given advice too: but if his head was too thick to see this, let him put the advice in practice; the probable result would cause little loss to society.

Something in this way were the "Hints on Horsemanship." In what way these "Hints on Coachmanship" will be taken, will depend on him who reads them.

We will suppose the good father of some young exquisite had in Philpot, Mincing, or Rood Lanes, or perhaps the Minories, amassed a fortune that the young gentleman is quite disposed to spend as fast as possible. Some young member of the West-End aristocracy, who honours the former with his acquaintance because he turns him to account, as the old citizen did the matters he traded in, puts it in Mr. Augustus Horatio's head to drive four horses—an act he would no more have contemplated during his father's life than the invitation of

Jem Robinson, Templeman, Nat, and (I now with great pleasure add my old favourite) Charles Marlow, to a lunch in the counting-house.

That Mr. Augustus Horatio, who had so often without the governor's knowledge hired and driven a gig, could want any hint on coachmanship of course never entered his head; but, as I strongly suspect he does want such, I will give him a lesson, throwing in his way some new lights on the subject, thus placing him on the top round of a ladder that I was ascending for many years with a good deal of patience, practice, and expense, and never got to the top of, either. Giving him credit for being more precocious, I will make him at least theoretically a coachman, and show how he may dispense with many habits of those who have driven years before he was born, without gaining the *éclat* that he will achieve in as many weeks.

We will suppose him going to lay hold of four horses he has never handled, and, in fact, that he has never handled four of any sort. Now nothing would make the latter circumstance more apparent to the bystanders than any exhibition of fear, nervousness, or hesitation on the part of Mr. Augustus: even the common precaution used by others more up to the thing might cause among any of Mr. Augustus's sort a suspicion of the fact. This must, of course, be avoided.

If an experienced coachman was unavoidably in such a situation as being obliged to exhibit at a street-door with four horses he had never driven or seen driven together, and with whose habits and mouths he was consequently totally unacquainted—before getting on his box he would probably scrutinize his team a little, and endeavour to judge by the look and demeanour of each whether among them any particular one seemed likely to

be in any way a troublesome customer; for it is astonishing (or rather would be astonishing to many if they knew) how much an experienced eye will detect as regards habits and temper in horses, even standing before starting. He would then most probably go to each horse's head. If they had been "put to" by persons knowing them and knowing their business, he would judge a good deal of each horse's habit by where his driving-reins were put on to his bit: any little addenda, or anything different in any part of the harness of a particular horse, would tell him his peculiarity without the trouble of enquiry. If he knew nothing of the horses, he would probably try them as they were put together, or, if he saw anything he considered very singular, would make enquiry as to its object.

If he had no great faith in the men who had harnessed the team, he would feel each horse's mouth by laying hold of his bit. If he found any one not bitted so as to suit his mouth, he would make some alteration till he produced the desired effect. He would probably pat and speak to each horse, that they might know his voice as much as possible on so short an acquaintance. He then quietly gathers up his reins, watching the effect this preparatory motion has on his team; draws the reins through the turrets to the proper length for mounting; passes them to his right hand, and with a quick but noiseless step gets on his box, seats himself firmly and comfortably, changing his reins to the proper hand, just feels his horses' mouths, and with "Let 'em go!" or a motion of the hand to the man, he just inclines his body a little forward, and giving such signal as he thinks judicious to his horses, or none at all, as the case may be, he lets them off as smoothly as a duck takes to the water. If any one horse shows impatience, and canters

or flings himself about, he gently stays him a little, and without throwing him abroad by rudely checking him, lets him canter on till the gentle pressure of the bit, and a soothing "Wo-ho!" or two brings him to his pace. If, after getting them quiet and reconciled, he finds they are not bitted so as to go pleasantly, at the first quiet place he sees he gradually pulls them up. If the men behind know their business, before the carriage is quite stationary they are on the ground and half-way to the horses' heads, looking to the driver for information what to do. "Check that off leader!" "Put that near leader to the lower branch off side!" "Take up, or let out" such a coupling rein. "Give (such a horse) a hole in his traces." "Take up or let out that curb-chain a link!" —is all understood, and only takes a minute's time. "That will do," or "Take care of yourselves," or merely a side inclination of the head, and the men quit the horses, jump up behind, and standing up for a minute to see if the alteration seems all right, or if they will be wanted to get down again, the team and their driver soon become perfectly at home with each other.

This is all very well, and something like what men do who know what they are about; but it is really very common-place, old-fashioned, and by no means a mode of proceeding that I would recommend to young men of spirit, such as Mr. Augustus Horatio: he, or such as he, if they drive, ride, or do anything else, most probably look to creating a sensation; at all events, they are fully convinced they do so, which is quite sufficient.

Now, the old staid mode of going to work I have described is by no means calculated to create a sensation, or general admiration, for these reasons—it requires something startling to create this, and there is nothing startling in a man taking four horses off without effort,

apparent difficulty, or danger; something must therefore be done to produce these, or the appearance of them, or we shall not only lose the sensation, but worse than that, the admiration; for, as there can be but little merit in doing anything in the doing of which no difficulty exists, little or no merit being shown, we have no right to expect admiration after this logical definition. I will tell Mr. Augustus how to go to work in a much more dashing style, which will probably "astonish the natives;" for who would be content to drive as Sir Henry Peyton does, merely for his amusement? He creates no sensation in the street: there he sits, with as much ease and as much at home, with four horses in his hand before dinner, as he is in his chair with a glass of claret in his hand after. True, such names as Onslow, Lade, Sefton, Baring, Agar, and every four-in-hand man, know Sir Henry to be A 1 as a coachman; but how is the multitude to know this?—they never see him *in* any difficulty —how are they, then, to judge how he would get *out* of one? and, as not more than one man in fifty of that multitude is the fiftieth part of a coachman, the multitude is the object to please and astonish, not that one man. But I will tell Mr. Augustus how at all events, to astonish him, and to astonish and please the multitude at the same time. "That's" (as Mr. Augustus says) "the ticket!"

We will say the four strange horses are waiting for him to take them in hand, In the name of all that's enterprising, let him not go sneaking about them, peeping and scrutinizing, as if he were afraid of them. The last coachman I alluded to took his team off without any difficulty, it is true—what credit did he get by it? Any potboy standing by, felt assured he could have done the same thing. He merely ranked in the estimation of the

crowd as Garrick did in that of the farmer, who, on his opinion being asked, said, "Do you mean that little chap? Oh, he can't play a bit; he only did just as I should have done if I'd been in the same mess he was."

No; go straight up to your wheelers, lay hold of your reins (never mind the bits—if you are a coachman you can drive with any bits; if they don't suit your horses' mouths, so much the better; it will put some of them on their mettle). Don't stand pulling and hauling your reins through the turrets, as if taking hold of four horses was an undertaking; grapple your ribbons at once (better not in the driving hand, or you might tumble over them in getting up). Never mind what length each rein is; for if on seating yourself you find your near-horse reins a foot or two too long, and your off-rein a foot too short, by which you get your horses on the footway, so much the better—it will be laid to the spirit of the nags; and, with a knowing look, say to your companion on the box, "I say, Bob, the tits are all in a fret." The men will hold them till you have, as a sailor would say, coiled up a fathom or two of your reins. Should you get a little pale, with some not-to-be-mentioned sensations, seeing your off-hand way of going to work, the paleness will be laid to anger at your team's impatience, and they will set you down as such a stunning fellow that you will hear some one say, "He'll give it 'em presently: this is the time o' day." This is taking hold of the crowd that have gathered together, as you did your horses, "by a *coup de main*."

It is quite possible that among the crowd witnessing Mr. Augustus's start there may be some coachman of the old or ordinary school; if so, it is equally possible that the dashing operations of our hero may procure a smile, not to say a sneer. What if it does? The display of

style and intrepidity has secured the suffrages of every gaper round; so, should the sneer of the old slow fogy be seen, some butcher-boy will say, "What are you grinning at? do you think you could drive them 'ere rum 'uns?" If this is not triumph, I know not what is. Where is the statesman that can ensure the voices of the multitude by a majority of a hundred to one? But Mr. Augustus does, and will do so, if he perseveres in the lessons I will give him.

We have seen Mr. Augustus with his two off-side horses on the footway, from which (as soon as he had coiled up his near reins), with a leetle shoving from his men, he gets them off.

"Well done, by Gad!" cries a young gentleman with an apology for an imperial on his chin, a broad dark braiding on his trousers, and under his arm a round, longish roll, looking very like patterns of different coloured silks. Here is not only something, but a good deal gained in point of credit as a whip; for if Mr. Augustus's horses had got themselves on the footway, he has shown he can get them off: a fact that we have no proof that Sir Henry can accomplish; for as, I believe, no one ever saw his horses out of their proper place, how can any one be certain he could, in such a case, get them into it again? Perhaps the worthy baronet will take my hint, and by the Augustian mode prove his coachmanship; if he does, I ensure him my most perfect astonishment, and that of many others.

As Augustus has, no doubt, given some of the footway passengers a start, it is time that we should give him a start also; which we will do, telling him how to effect it with the increasing admiration of the natives. To do this, we must attend to the smallest matters that may produce effect.

Many coachmen, on starting, have their whip with the thong plied round the crop, and the last foot of it in their hand. This I strongly reprobate. First, it will create a doubt whether, we will say, Mr. Augustus *could* hit a leader properly, and, in fact, it would look as if he did not intend trying to do so. This long thong, I can tell him, is a matter of considerable importance to him, and is as imposing an emblem of a four-in-hand, as are the colours of a regiment to it. Besides, how does he know which or what horse he may want to hit or correct; and supposing it was a leader (I just suppose), by the time Mr. Augustus had—by untwists, twists, and again untwists—really got his thong at liberty, the cause for its use would have been long gone by. He then wants to hit (*he* must use no term less important than "double-thong") a wheeler. He has now to twist his thong up again, in the doing of which, he may not possibly get a turn near the setting on, but some two or three very loose ones round the handle and his own arm; besides, so quick—or, in modern phrase, so *fast*—a coachman as he, must not wait for this ceremony, but must say to his hits, as Lady Macbeth did to her guests—

> "Stand not on the order of your going—
> But go at once!"

No! let the thong fly like the flag that

> "Braved the battle and the breeze."

It is thus ready for any horse; for some horse or horses *must* be hit at starting, want it or not, for the sake of effect. Besides, it will tell them what they have to expect, if they misbehave on their journey. Mr. Augustus being now seated, must, for form sake, make the interrogatory, "Right?" Some one might wonder

who the "Right" was addressed to; no matter, if the gapers wonder at Mr. Augustus altogether. The men, as ordered, reply, "All right, sir!" Augustus gives a kind of railroad whistle; his box companion produces a monstrous horn, in addition to the one with the men; and the horses start. How far Augustus goes on "all right," we shall see as he gets along.

There are numbers of persons in this world who are very particular in all they do. I hate particular people. I am so myself, as regards all that is done where horses are concerned; but this says nothing against my general dislike, for I am not particularly attached to myself, or have cause to be so. Some men, in driving along a straight road, like to see their wheels "track." I must say, with four horses in my hand, I should not like, if I stood up and looked back, to then see I had made a corkscrew on the road half a mile long. I quite agree that the polehook looks better pointed between the leaders than between the quarters of either one of them. If we wish to "spring them a bit," so as to "cheat a hill," I grant that one horse having the stride of a Bay Middleton, and his companion the up and down of a cob for an elderly gentleman, is not desirable, inasmuch as the bars fly about in most "admired disorder," showing a movement like a see-saw in extraordinary quick motion; and if the wheel-horses have the same kind stride, are strong, and the coach or carriage light, it gives it somewhat the swing of a bustle on certain ladies we meet in Regent Street. All these particularities are not only remarked, but objected to, by coachmen; but they are beneath the notice of the Augustian or Horatian school. But we must get Mr. Augustus along somehow.

If in driving I meet an equipage, a glance mostly tells

me whether a workman is on the box, or merely a man who drives. In the first case, I merely cast an eye on his hands, and by them can see as well what he proposes doing, as if he gave me his intentions in words. With such a man, I have no fear in "feather-edging" it as close as he likes; for I well know, if I clear his bars, I shall not have his roller-bolt brought in contact with my own. But this will not do if meeting a mere man on a box. How could his hands shew me what he intends doing, when probably he scarcely knows himself?—and if he does, he as probably does not know how to do it. I should as soon think of looking at such a man's feet as his hands, as indications of his intentions. Even looking at the pointing of his pole wont do; for if it points, as a sailor would say, north-east by east one moment, it might be north-west by west the next. The only safe proceeding, is to give such a steersman a wide berth, and that accompanied by an unmistakable hint from yourself, as to where you would wish him to keep or go—that is if he can, a thing by no means to be considered as a certainty. I am always most particularly courteous to such customers, and so probably would be some other slow fellows like me. So it will show that the advice I shall give Mr. Augustus Horatio, will verily conduce both to his safety, and also to produce effect; for wishing to be thought a coachman by brethren of the craft is one thing, and determining to be wondered at as a stunning young fellow is another.

Now, to see four horses coming along straight, smoothly, and showing that the artist has them all in hand as safe as a mouse-trap, is all very well, and I think very pretty. Our workman has one of Friburg's best weeds in his mouth; and each horse's mouth is so nicely felt, that he has a spare hand occasionally for the use of his bit of aroma.

This shows a man at his ease; but as he is doing nothing to astonish, he cannot say that, like a comet, he is "wondered at." Let Mr. Augustus come along in other guise! let him come along with his team like the horses of the Sun, as if each contemplated a different intent, Augustus, Phaeton-like, bringing his as yet triumphant car along in maddening career, as if "a kingdom was too small a bound" for it and him! Shades of that departed small fry who used to patronize the Black Dog in Old Peter's time, cognomening themselves, *par excellence*, the F.I.H.C., hide your diminished heads! Show me one of ye, or the lot *en masse*, who would dispute the road with the Augustan "Clear the way!" His, I maintain, is the safe plan, as well as the astounding one; for I think it will be ceded to me that, whether you carefully get out of the way of others, or they get out of the way of you, the beneficial result is the same: and if you are not certain of being able to effect this yourself, drive as I advise; and I will be bound others will get far enough out of your road. If they should presume or be forced to come into anything like proximity to you, turn on him at once with a "Hoy, hoy! what, are you tired of your life, old Fumblefingers?" Your man—if he, like his master, is of the fast school—will, as he passes, give old Slow-and-go-easy a bray in his ear with his horn.

We had left Mr. Augustus just effecting a start, or rather, having made one; consequently, he had not as yet got the steam up; so his team went off merrily, curvetting, and throwing themselves into various and sundry positions, as suited the whim or temper of each. Now, extended as may be the notions of any man as to the proper quantity of roadway allowable to one vehicle, most persons will agree that somewhere between the footway is the proper place for it; yet, with all such

liberal allowance of space, Mr. Augustus finds it no easy task to keep his nags within it; but as each leader seemed to have some premeditated course of his own, and as the course of each differed, the sundry pulls and hauls of Mr. Augustus so constantly counteracted the volition of each, that they, *nolens volens*, kept, though not straight, still in a serpentine course along the carriage-way; but in driving, in racing, or in the race of life, we cannot always keep in "straight running:" in fact, in the latter case, it is not easy to get *into* it, much less keep there. So it was with Augustus. All streets have an end, and then there must be a turn—in other words, corner. Now, better coachmen than I, may say that corners present no difficulties. To them, perhaps, they do not; but I have found some that, in figurative language, were rather three-cornered things to manage neatly—that is, where the cross-street is a very narrow one. In such cases (though I may be wrong), I have kept my pole pointed to the left, even after my leaders had diverged to the right, and perhaps passed my thong over my off wheeler, to keep him well up to his traces. This is perhaps slow, but I have found it safe; yet it really gave people an idea I was actually afraid of a post. This would not do for our Augustus. No, no. Turn your horses altogether; lay the double thong into your near-side wheeler. This will bring him round a shaver; so did Augustus. Over went an old apple and orange woman. Away went her rowley-poleys! "Och, murther! my fruit!" "All right, mother!" cries Augustus: "Chuck her a sovereign, Bill!" says he to his man. "That's a stunning chap!" cries a baker's boy. "Twoo-twoo-twoo!" goes Bill's horn; and away goes the four (*not*) in hand. "The Corner" is reached; Knightsbridge is reached. The old veritable cabbies

stare; the faster Hansom's-cab wide-awakes twig the new votary for notoriety in a moment, and touch their hats, hoping fervently chance may throw such a customer in their way. "I say, Sam," says a handsome young fellow, whose dress and general appearance at once show it was not over-prudence or ultra purity of conduct that brought him to drive a Hansom, "if that's a patent safety, it's on a new construction." The tits had now somewhat settled to their work—that is, not that they had got to go together, and work pleasantly and equally; but each, having his blood somewhat up, began to pull at our charioteer in a way that he little thought a pair, much less four, could pull. The turnpike at Kensington is reached. To stop, Augustus felt was impossible; so, making the best of the matter, he called to his man, "Chuck down a crown: d—n the expense!" An old acquaintance of mine, who has for years officiated there, and to whom I have given many an extra shilling, caught it back-handed. Augustus's face was now fast assuming a bright scarlet tinge. His arms felt as if a vice had been on them for twenty-four hours. He had a vague idea of stopping to get his team curbed up to holdable tightness; but, like the cork leg, he could not stop. A short way further on the road, it had been newly and deeply gravelled. No sea-worn passenger ever hailed the sight of land with greater pleasure than did Augustus this promise of a check to his wilful team. On coming to it (with an inward touch of exhaustion), he relaxed his hold of them. This, of course, threw them all abroad. They rushed through the gravel for a few yards; then, when one pulled, another stopped, and *vice versa*. The near wheeler, with more pluck or devilry in him than the rest, makes a determined pull forward. Snap goes the

outside trace! The rest stop, each looking different ways. The half-loosened horse turns his quarters from the carriage, and, hanging sideways, pulls the pole to the near leader's flank. He sets kicking—kicks as if he had been at it before, and knew how to kick. The off wheeler, fearing a taster of his heels on his nose, throws himself away so suddenly, that he slips up, and gets under the pole. From the one horse hanging away, the wheel-reins get tightened so much in our charioteer's hands, that, on the wheeler falling, our young coachman gets pulled off his feet, and falls over the toe-board. While struggling to get up, the prostrate wheeler gives his master a tap on the head, that on a thinner skull would have told a tale that would not have wanted repeating; but they say Providence fits the back to the burthen, so being (*pro tempore*) a little more senseless than usual was all its consequence in this case. Fortunately, this occurred in a crowded neighbourhood; and in such there are always present some who know what they are about; so the team are got on their legs, a pair of posters put to the drag, and the master and his friends in it. Probably, before his next essay, he will consider that, though such advice as I have given may lead to producing effect, there are certain old-fashioned slow ways more calculated to at least promise safety.

THE MONARCH OF THE WOODS.

The *Sporting Magazine* was lying on the table of the parlour of a small inn, or rather public-house, to which the respectable portion of those residing in and near the village resort. It is true, that in a usual way this serial is accustomed to more aristocratic company; but Mag is a very ubiquitous lady, and if she is not exclusive in her acquaintance, it arises from her general hearty welcome wherever she goes.

"The Monarch of the wood—ay, that's the bull," says Neighbour Turnfurrow, a comfortable farmer, whose honest, good-humoured, weather-beaten face is, to use a pictorial term, in good keeping with the red handkerchief that encircles his neck.

"Not a bit of it," cries Steelyard, the butcher; "the bull may be a monarch in your yard, but the ox for me; he's a monarch everywhere, and show me one as has so many loving subjects."

"Well, that ain't a bad 'un, Steelyard!" joins in the landlord, who fully appreciates the advantage he derives from the (so styled) rich sirloin partaken of, on market-day, at the farmers' dinner.

"Tally-ho!" musically shouts Dick Straighthorn, huntsman to the crack pack that hunt the surrounding country. "Tally-ho! away! the fox is monarch of the woods for my money."

"Why, Mr. Straighthorn," says Steelyard, "axing your pardon, it's quite ridiculous calling that contemptible, stinking, little varmint monarch anywhere, unless he gets into a hen-roost."

"You're rather too fast over the country," returns Straighthorn, who was always as hard to beat in a warm argument as in a cold scent. "I don't often wish to see a check; but I think I can bring you to one. As to a fox being contemptible, nothing's contemptible that causes amusement and advantage to a country. Fox-hunting does that; and without foxes, we should have no fox-hunting: so, you see, he ain't so contemptible, after all. As to his stinking, Mr. Steelyard, that's all matter of opinion. I've smelt your shop not quite so sweet as the morning air, when you've kept meat too long rather than sell it, as I think (meaning no offence) you might do to the poor, at a moderate price."

Steelyard winced at this "hit off" of the huntsman's, and the chuckle that went round the room; but not having "his earth" close by, he did not wish to raise the cry of the pack, so said nothing.

"But to go on," says Straighthorn. "Now, when my lady pulls out her perfumed pocket-handkerchief, the scent is as disagreeable to me as probably the scent of a fox is to her; so you see, as I say, stinking is matter of taste and opinion. Now, as to the fox being little, we don't value everything by being fat or big, as you do your oxen; and if I call a fox my monarch of the woods, I ain't far out of my line of country, for we know, to our advantage, it don't require a big body to make a great Sovereign. So you must 'hark back,' Muster Steelyard, and I must 'hark away,' for it's getting late."

So saying, Dick left the room. Steelyard was beginning to get up his bristles, as a bit of a laugh was raised

against him by those remaining; but a rattling "Tally-ho!" given by Dick as he passed the window, so discomfited the stalwart Knight of the Cleaver, that, in the term Dick would use, he "bolted."

I do not allude to either of the animals mentioned, in using the term monarch of the woods, however much habit and partiality may make me lean to the opinion of Dick. I quote on poetical authority, and allude to the stag—"lord of the forest," "the lordly stag," "the royal hart," "the antler'd monarch of the grove." Lordly and high-sounding titles, i'faith; but let us see how far such high prestige is deserved. We may find that truth is not to be cajoled by poetic flights; so we will, in homely prose and phrase, describe the figurative monarch as he is.

Ask the Asiatic whom he holds monarch among quadrupeds, he would name the lordly elephant; the Nubian, the stately lion; and possibly, from his utility to him, the Greenlander would quote the whale as lord of all dumb creation. Each of these has certainly strong claims to supremacy. When we consider the enormous strength, the resolution, and more than instinct of the elephant, he, perhaps, of all quadrupeds, may be held supreme. The noble bearing of the lion, which, if it does not induce him to seek, causes him to shrink from no encounter with living animal, is, indeed, a strong claim to kingly prerogative. Even the cowardly, but predacious tiger, is known to have, when it is called forth, that desperatism in him, that renders him a fearful antagonist even to the stupendous elephant: but his sneaking and cat-like mode of attack, and cowardly avoidance of danger, unless under extraordinary influence, have ever kept him from ranking higher than a scourge to the country he inhabits.

By what attribute, then, has the stag challenged a

title to which he has so few pretensions? He is, by those little acquainted with his nature, held as a bold, courageous animal; whereas he is, in truth, one of the veriest curs among quadrupeds. It is true that he is, at a particular season, when a kind of frenzy actuates him, mischievous and dangerous to approach: this is only like the temporary courage of the coward, when under the influence of intoxication; the season of frenzy past, he resumes his usual pusillanimity. It is true, when he finds his speed or endurance failing him, as a last resource, he stands at bay, and will vigorously defend himself, and even charge his pursuers; so will often the rankest coward. Could we call him bold or brave, who would run if threatened by his fellow-man, and only fight when despair urges him to do so, in preference to abiding instant death? It may be said the hunted stag flies from a host of enemies. No doubt such is the case; but he would fly equally from a single enemy that he could immolate on the spot. If this is doubted by any, I take the liberty of introducing a corroborative anecdote.

Riding on the heath, near the well-known meet of Tower Hill, accompanied by a terrier, we came suddenly on a herd of out-lying deer. The terrier ran up to them, when one of these (so styled) lordly stags singled himself from the herd, and with the terrier yelping and screeching at his heels, most ingloriously made the best of his way towards Swinley. Wishing a gallop, I followed; he took the fence that skirts the park; the terrier, who, by-the-by, had run with fox-hounds, got in also, and fairly drove this monarch of the woods out again on to the heath. I really enjoyed the fun, and confess I in an under-tone cheered the dog on. We skirted South Park, nor did the terrier leave him till he

jumped into Bramshill domain, where I called my single-handed pack off; no doubt, could the dog have run into his game, he would have been annihilated; but the difference between the brave or timid is whether fighting or running away is held preferable. So much for the stag's claim to courage.

Poets probably conceived that having no large wild animals of a ferocious nature denizens of our woods, plains, or heaths, the stag was lord of all such localities. Had they seen my chase with Viper, he would have shown their vaunted monarch to be a very contemptible subject.

There is something very imposing in the look of a stag when he rears his nobly-antlered front; something in his eye, if he will let us get near enough to him to look into it, that bespeaks both defiance and resolution; but here we may appropriately quote "*Ne crede frontis.*" Supposing he moves off, there is a something in his leisurely gait that seems to indicate that it is more to avoid intrusion on his royal person than any sense of fear that actuates his movement; he is, however, a veritable impostor; a shout and the smack of a whip turn this imposing front from us, and if he shows us its reverse, it is not in him any act of contempt, but done preparatory to getting it out of harm's way by ignominious flight. His going off so leisurely is very probably instinct not to court pursuit; but let him find what he fears as danger quickly following, he will very shortly show the mettle he is made of, by taking to his heels without delay.

Association of ideas very commonly throws a halo of interest and reputed beauty among many things that possess little pretensions to either. The swan, another of the poet's idols, shows very well in the water. The

goose attracts no attention when, so situated, he comes in proximity to his statelier neighbour. But let the proud swan come on land, he becomes a mis-shapen, ill-proportioned, ungainly object; while the white gander, who rivals him in hue, far exceeds him in other particulars, and shows himself what he really is—a well-proportioned, neatly-turned, handsome bird.

The name or presence of the stag carries the mind to sylvan scenes so grateful to the eye or dear to the recollection of all the admirers of nature. There may be certainly little beauty in the barren moor or heath-covered mountain, to those accustomed to woodland scenery and smiling valleys; but there is a charm to him born in the wild, in the very wildness others might complain of; while the forester as dearly loves the seclusion of the vast forest, where,

"Far from the busy haunts of men,"

he makes himself acquainted with the habits of each denizen of its shade—happier, far happier than he whom necessity compels to become intimate with the habits of man.

Now, to investigate the beauty often attributed to the stag, I must consider that no quadruped can have any just claims to beauty that cannot boast of fair symmetry. A gaudy or really beautiful covering makes many animals beautiful objects, but in many such cases it is the covering, not the animal, that is beautiful; now the stag cannot pretend to even this advantage, though some fallow-deer may. Cut off the fine antlers of the stag, he becomes merely an ill-formed and (prejudice aside) very plain animal. His head we will admit to be pretty and blood-like; here his beauty ends: for, come to his neck, did any one ever yet admire that of the sheep or

camel? if not, we cannot that of the stag. His shoulders are low, usually straight, and thin through from shoulder-blade to shoulder-blade. Who would buy a horse with such for any purpose? for they indicate neither strength nor speed. He is small in the brisket, shallow in his girth, has flat sides, and, to look at him, we should pronounce him weak in the loins; he is short in his croup, no muscular development in his thighs, and, coming to his hocks, such a shambling pair were never seen, except on a cow. These in the horse we hold to be the great propellers, both in galloping and leaping. The stag sets all criticism at defiance, as regards well-placed hocks being indispensable for such purposes; all we can say, not to refute the opinions of good judges, is, that great as are the powers of the stag in these particulars, they would be greater if the hocks were better. I have certainly seen a hunted stag take extraordinary leaps; as to height, the highest I ever saw one take was a seven-foot wall. I have seen a horse, with eleven stone on him, clear six at timber. Both India-rubber and Perfection, with a rider, have cleared higher fences, merely at the volition of man. What those horses—when, like the stag, under the influence of fear—could have done, no man can say. A stroke of the whip, or the application of the spur, may, and does, cause a horse to face a fence he would not voluntarily do, and the fear of falling or hurt causes him to clear it; but all this falls very short of the desperate resolution that actuates the stag under the influence of fear of a pack of hounds at his heels. It may seem singular, but it is fact, that during several consecutive seasons with stag-hounds, I never once saw a stag take in width a leap bordering on what I have seen horses take, with perhaps twelve stone on their backs. It may be said that water usually produces the

greatest necessity of wide jumping, and that the stag liking the element, and the horse fearing it, produces the idea of the first preferring wading or swimming to jumping; the latter, unless much exhausted, clearing the impediment rather than go through it. This is probably in many cases the fact; yet it seems singular that an animal closely pursued, when time is of vital importance, should venture to waste it in floundering into and out of a brook of fourteen feet in width, when we should fairly conclude he might clear a far greater width with little effort: be it as it may, I never saw a stag take a very long leap, nor, judging from their style of leaping, do I believe they can, for they jump everything short. A horse, merely leisurely cantered up to a gate, will compass many more feet in width in doing so than does the stag. I must see some new feature in their jumping to what I have seen, ere I feel sure a stag really could jump the same width as could, and did, old Moonraker.

We now come to the "fleetness of the stag"—another piece of poetic imagery. He is fleet, no doubt, but fleet *quoad* what? Fleet, no doubt, in comparison to the horses ridden when poets eulogised the fleetness alluded to—when hounds (of the kind they were) were led in leashes by men on foot, and placed as relays to be slipped as occasion required—when knights gallant rode in velvet hats and plumes, bestrode high-peaked saddles covered with velvet, with as highly-ornamented breastplates, for ornament, not use; for their steeds boasted carcases too rotund to render slipping through the girths a possibility. To counteract a far more probable circumstance, the saddle getting forward, a crupper, with an ornamented appendage very like a breachen, was also sported. Well might their "panting steeds" be quoted by the poets as emblems of "the flying chase;" no doubt they did pant,

and the fleetness of the stag in contrast shone conspicuously; for let him escape the numbers assembled, so as to gain the open country, it would have been thought as much an act of madness to pursue him as to pursue the wind.

We do not quite hold with such ideas in 1856; for if we do not attempt to catch winds, we quite succeed in catching stags, and if it were wished, could catch them much sooner than we do. They can, when urged, go a great pace, no doubt; but it is only comparatively great, for there is not a race-horse worth training that could not, carrying a rider, beat any stag in an open plain, though the latter would have nothing to lessen his powers of speed.

If I have shown that the stag has nothing to boast of, in point of courage, proved (as I trust I have) he has few pretensions to beauty or harmony of symmetry, and that his speed is only comparative, he has no great deal left on which to found his claims to his title of Monarch of the Woods.

Having, I believe, impartially scanned the pretensions of the stag, we will now look a little to his origin. The deer family are to be found in all the four quarters of the globe, differing greatly in size and very considerably in form. We have the sprightly ibex, the light gazelle, the useful and docile reindeer, up to the lofty elk and moose specimen of the Cervus kind, down to the minutest species of the deer family. I have heard, though I do not quote it as authority, that the stag or red deer owes his origin to Germany; I have, in fact, frequently heard them designated German deer. It matters little to investigate this particular. They have for ages been inhabitants of Great Britain—we may, perhaps, say of Scotland more particularly, that land of

heather and mountain so congenial to their nature. Their numbers are now far decreased; as one cause, thanks to the railroads, who carry all the vices of the town to the once virtuous and peaceful inhabitants of distant districts, and bring back in recompense turkeys at Christmas time, that, though brought in accumulated numbers, fetch, as I know to my cost, precisely the same price they did when the old Norfolk coach was one of the chief conveyances of this Christmas bird to London. Do we get them one shilling cheaper now, though the towns and villages between here and Norwich are devastated by the change of system? Bless all railway projectors and directors, who, no doubt, without any interested views, petition for a rail to any place where they, from its absence, see the inhabitants content and happy. If I am not a good, who can say I am not a pious man, when I pray for those who, time will show, will have few others to pray for them?

I have said that particular ideas, incident to circumstances, often invest things with an interest that in reality is not their right. I found this on a particular occasion. At one time I was constantly in the habit of seeing herds of the red deer in Windsor Park and forest. After a time, they ceased to interest me more than would so many sheep; but passing over Bagshot Heath in an unusually thick fog, I came suddenly on a herd, some lying in the road, and some at the side. In their usual apparently indolent way they rose and moved off, others showing a front that might have alarmed one less acquainted with those creatures than I was. But there was an interest in the scene, a kind of romance for the idea to work upon, that I felt, but cannot describe. All that could remind us we were in a habitable world was shut out: all was chaos around us: those beings of the

mist and I seemed shut out from all but ourselves and the few yards we could see around us. I stopped my horse, and contemplated with a wild, perhaps singular, feeling of pleasure and satisfaction the circumscribed scene around me. The herd at length moved off. The effect of the gradual obscurity of their receding forms was a subject for a painter. A somewhat romantic turn of mind caused me to soliloquise — "Thus fade our visions of happiness in life."

But to leave romance and turn to common-place observation. Somerville, who on most subjects is more correct authority than poets usually are, rouses our pity for the hunted deer, by the statement that he sheds tears of distress. Whether our poet conceived this to be fact, or used his observation to excite interest, I know not; but this I do know, such supposition has no foundation in truth. We might as well say the dog sheds tears from his tongue, because perspiration issues from that organ. I suspect the mistake or representation of Somerville arose from most of the deer kind having a kind of slit under each eye, from which at times a liquid flows that might be conceived to be tears. I have dissected a deer's head, and found those cavities run up to the jaw-bone. Whether, as the deer breathes through the mouth, these extra vents add facility to respiration or the smell, is, as far as I have heard, a matter of doubt. From the proximity of these slits to the eyes, it would naturally enough lead to the supposition that they were in some way auxiliaries to those organs. Nor do I assert that they may not be; but I could not trace the slightest communication between them. There are naturalists who affirm these orifices are connected with the olfactory organs, and are given in addition to the faculties other quadrupeds enjoy. Of one thing there is no

doubt: the stag possesses a more exquisite susceptibility of scent than most other quadrupeds. Of this the forester and deer-stalker is perfectly aware; for without the precaution of getting down the wind (that is, to leeward of the herd), we cannot get within any reasonable distance of it. Be it as it may, it matters little for what these addenda were given: they serve, however, to distinguish and particularize the deer tribe.

Whenever I venture any opinion at variance with the general one, I ever feel I lay myself open to a charge of prejudice or error—perhaps both. Having, then, stated that, independent of his antlers, I hold the stag a rather plain animal, I must beg to revert to the subject, in order to endeavour to prove I have some foundation for this opinion.

Every person on seeing a herd of fallow deer pronounces them beautiful, more or less, in accordance with the appearance of the general herd; for there is a very striking difference between herds in some parks and those bred in others. There are deer whose skin presents a light fawn colour, down to a dark bay and brown ground, nearly covered with white spots; such are very ornamental. Others have the white spots less clearly marked, and fewer in number; others merely show an agreeable light bay entire colour, with the dark brown stripe down the spine. All these are deserving admiration as regards colour; but there are many only showing a very dingy, sooty-coloured black, relieved by dingy mouse-coloured markings. Such are hideous in colour; and if a herd of such were seen, I believe any one who had seen no other would pronounce the fallow-deer a most ugly animal. Yet he has very much the same proportions, on a diminished scale, as the stag; which shows, I think, that it is not to symmetry the

stag owes any of the admiration he excites. It is, I believe, an imposing carriage at first sight—leading us to suppose him a noble, courageous animal, which he really is not—that causes the admiration he creates; while association of ideas—bringing him in connection with such scenes as Sir Walter Scott has so graphically portrayed—invests him with an interest inseparable from him under any situation.

I have heard much argument, *pro* and *con*, used relative to the comparative speed of animals. When such has been the case, and the horse was one of those under discussion, one thing as relates to him I have frequently observed has been lost sight of—namely, that he carries a rider. I have expressed my conviction that a very moderate race-horse could, with little effort, out-pace any stag. I am quite ready to admit the horse, from his superior length of stride, ought to do this; so I allow it but just he should carry weight, to put the two animals on equal terms. The stag can out-pace the hound in a mere short trial of speed; and, as in the case of a horse, he ought to do so, and not claim on that account any great merit on the score of speed either.

I should say, taking dogs and bitches, twenty-four inches is a fair average to reckon on as the height of a fox-hound; the regular stag-hound, as he existed fifty years since, measured more, but was more heavily made, so he gained nothing as regards speed by his increased height.

In "give and take" plates, in racing, seven pounds to an inch is the penalty paid by the higher Galloway or horse; thus showing that, as in increased height, increased stride and strength are expected, the importance attached to height is manifested. I have ever considered such races by no means fair as a proper test of the merits

of horses. We suppose a horse of fifteen hands to possess greater powers of stride than the one of fourteen hands and a half. Whether he has or has not the capability we will not dispute, for it could not be ascertained; but, at all events, we often see that he presents no indication of practising them, for the lesser horse is sometimes found to evince the longer stride. And as regards powers of carrying weight, unless greater height is accompanied by corresponding increased bone, sinew, and muscle, the height, as regards strength, is disadvantageous.

The usual height of the stag or red deer I should say is about thirty-eight inches, fourteen more than the fox-hound. So as regards the horse and stag, the higher animal ought to beat the lower; and we admit the stag to beat the hound. But how would it be if, for the fourteen inches' advantage, we accommodated Mr. Stag with seven stone on his back? I think the result of such a handicap, as height goes, is easily predicted. It may be said the stag was not intended to carry a weight. Granted. Yet the llama does, who is of deer tribe; and if the Laplander does not mount the rein-deer, he drives him in harness; and verily, no bad buggy-horse is he. Thus we find the large deer kind have very considerable strength, which ought to be taken into account when we see them contend in speed with lower animals. It is no disgrace to the stag that he is beat for speed by the minute and delicate antelope of his own species, the greyhound of a different one, or equalled by the hare and fox of another genus; but it shows that it is not the stag we should portray or quote as an emblem of speed.

I have heard it mooted that the paddocked stag kept for hunting labours under the unequal odds of our

hounds and horses being in the finest possible wind, while the stag is not. This is true; but as a set-off, we give him, as a large animal, no weight to carry more than the hound, as comparatively a small one; and horses have, perhaps, on an average, in the field, at least, twelve stone to carry.

If anything were wanted to show the great superiority of our horses and hounds as regards both breeding and condition, the following remarks would, I trust, prove that such is the case.

Formerly it was only stags who inhabited the forest that were hunted. These were often, no doubt, roused with full stomachs, and filled with food not the most conducive to wind or endurance; yet, if permitted to go on fair terms with his pursuers, the latter were distanced. Now our hunting deer eat the same food as helps to win a Derby, and are kept from such as would be prejudicial to wind as scrupulously as is the race-horse, an advantage no other hunted animal is awarded.

Now Reynard enjoys no such advantages. True, he sometimes regales on a rabbit or pullet, but I believe his more frequent substitute for a dinner is a field-mouse, worms, or anything he can get to support nature. When such is not the case, and chance has thrown a plentiful supper in his way, he is disturbed with a full stomach to run for life or death; at other times, when a long nightly journey has induced him to seek the first secluded part of the cover to rest his tired form, he is driven, when stiff and tired, to do his best to escape hounds fresh from the kennel—awful odds, indeed, against poor pug! Yet, under such fearful circumstances, how often does this truly game little animal beat, not only the speed and instinct of hounds, but the watchful eyes of huntsman, whips, and the field. Bravo, little one! If extra-

ordinary attributes and deeds have raised men to be monarchs of a people, why should they not a fox to be the sportsman's Monarch of the Woods? Tay, yo! is all very well when we merely want a gallop, but Tally-ho, away! thrills to the heart.

"THE RULING PASSION."

I NEED not finish the quotation, for he to whom it alludes was only "gone to ground" when the pace became too fast for him; and verily he did "go the pace" till fairly pumped out; the "go" is taken out of him, or rather such appliances as enabled him to go are now taken from him, or go again he would, not as he once did, for age will tell on all things; yet, though as an Octogenarian (for bordering on that he must be) he could now make fight with good ones of only half his age, he would show some of our low phaeton-driving, omnibus-riding, casino-frequenting, and Jullien-patronizing youths of 1856 how "Fields were won," or, at all events, crossed by youths of his days, and would even now lead them a dance *al fresco*, to which they would be forced to confess the polka is barely motion. The frame would yield now to prolonged exertion; but could a horse be found to clear the Thames, he would even now put him at it. Whether, knowing horses cannot jump quite as wide, he would, as I once saw him do, force his horse into this said river, trusting to Providence as to the getting out, I know not; but nothing would surprise me that he might do: he ever was, in technical phrase, "a devil untied," and a precious hard-bitten one too.

It was not a year or two back, but a few at the end of those, when I first saw the subject of these lines; it

was when Tom Oldaker and old Brush were as much assimilated in the minds of every sportsman of their day, as have the Captain and Vyvian been, of a later date.

I will here mention a rise Old Tom got out of me at that time; in short, "did" the "young 'un," *alias* Mr. Green, *alias* my noble self, "brown." I had often asked him to let me have half an hour on old Brush, partly from curiosity, partly to be enabled to say I had ridden him. Now, in a general way, Tom would just as soon have consented to let a man bestride his shoulders, as the back of his horse; still he had always promised that some day I should have my wish. We had one day had a pretty severe twist over the best part of the Gerard's Cross country, had got near West Wycombe, the fox's line pointing towards Wendover; the country rode heavy, and few were up—we came to a check. "Now," says Tom, "as there's not many here to see, I'll make my promise good, and you shall see our fox killed on Brush. We changed; they hit it off beyond some sheep, and away they went, with a breast-high scent, the country getting every yard more holding. Respect for the old horse, and indeed his master, induced me to nurse my nag most tenderly. I need not say hounds can race over ground that brings on the sad complaint, "The Slows," with the best of horses. They gained upon me; not so with Tom; a pretty dressing I saw he was giving my thorough-bred, and I soon smoked his choosing this particular time to change horses. The old horse could not be held answerable for this knowing trick of his master; so we laboured on, and came up just after every atom of pug, consigned to the hounds, had disappeared, my mare's tail shaking two hundred to the minute. Tom politely thanked me for the care I had taken of the old horse, and in return protested,

in the words of old Dick Knight, he "was never so carried."

At the time to which I refer, it was the practice of the Old Berkeley to come from their own country—which was a very extensive, and, indeed, take all in all, a very good one—and to fix their head quarters at Wokingham, in Berkshire, about as bad a fox-hunting neighbourhood as can well be conceived; there may be, but I certainly never saw fox-hounds in a worse, not even the worst parts of Essex. I really venerate any and every man who promotes foxhounds being kept anywhere, where there are foxes to hunt, hounds can get to kill, and horses can follow not merely somehow, but anyhow; but no man would go to such a country to hunt, if he could get hunting elsewhere, nor would he stay in such a place unless circumstances all but compelled him to do so. However, for some politic reasons, Oldaker during the season brought the hounds there for a short time; and I never saw him in good humour from the time of his arrival to that of his departure. Who could blame him?

The "ruling passion" must have been strong, or some cause very strong indeed, that induced the subject of these pages to send four hunters to this town of bull-baiting notoriety; but come they did, and also came their master. It is true, that so far as the fencing went, it mattered little to him what it was; for he once said to me, "I can scarcely conceive a fence that is not to be jumped, bored through, knocked down, or swam over." "What say you," said I, "to a seven foot brick and mortar wall?" "That would beat me, I suppose," said he; "but as the hounds could not jump it, I should have no occasion to try it; but I never found where a hound could go, that I could not in some way or other

get after him;" and this, under any ordinary circumstances, I quite believe was the case.

The hounds had a fixture at a sure find between Swallowfield and Reading, a part of (then) Sir J. Cope's country; there were not a score of men out (showed the good sense of those who were not); I was not one of the wise, so was there. Knowing—I will not say the line of country, but rather the line of covers—I waited wide of the one the hounds were running in—good fun enough for pug; for after bothering hounds, huntsmen, and whips as long as he thought it convenient, he had only to break, give his brush a flourish as if in defiance, and in half-a-dozen small enclosures he was sure of another friendly shelter. This was certainly hunting a fox (equally probably foxes), but a sad apology for fox-hunting.

Having been (I must call it) unfortunate enough to have been for some years resident in so bad a fox-hunting country, I knew it well—knew the habits of the foxes there; so as in hare-hunting I had learned to take a "find" quite coolly, well knowing if he were found in Purblind wood and broke, he would just scuttle away and cross a few fields to Nook-and-Corner copse, and so forth. I was, on the occasion in question, "sitting like Patience," not "on a monument," but on a gate in a lane close by the cover, holding my horse by the bridle. The first-whip was waiting at the end of the cover; over the hedge out of it came the varmint, "fresh as a bridegroom," and judging from the crash and cry in cover, "perfumed like a milliner" in strength of scent, if not in the odour of it; quick as he was, the whip was as quick as he, for away he went twenty miles an hour for the adjacent cover, and headed my gentleman, so as to induce him to make up his mind to seek cover further

a-field. I was by this time mounted, and the hounds were close to the fence leading into the lane, Oldaker with his arm before his eyes protecting them, as old Brush brought him through a thick fence out of cover, a few tail-hounds at his heels. "Yoi over, Joker, old boy!" cried some one; and a moment after, a gentleman on a grey, bringing half the hedge with him, half jumped, half slid, into the lane. "Over it is again!" cried the gentleman, waving his cap, and putting his horse at the opposite fence, that few horses could jump, and few would attempt; but the good little grey did, and getting his fore feet on the top, and his hind ones half up the bank, he contrived to crawl up the remainder: I expected to see him come backwards. "Yoik forward!" hallooed Madcap, for so we will call him, still waving his cap and setting the grey going. I had ignominiously put my back to a gate, lifted it off its hinges, and was quietly walking my horse till the hounds came up; through the same came old Oldaker, his tail-hounds having passed him, and racing to join the body, I heard something like d—g somebody's somethings; I guessed who was meant, but knew Tom too well to ask questions when I saw he was out of humour. He had not seen the whip turn puggy, so made for the entrance to the cover to the right; I had seen it, so crossed the line to the left. Round suddenly turned the pack, skirting the cover; away they went, heads up for nearly two miles—an unwonted burst in that locality—and over they vaulted into a large cover. The fox had, as it turned out, made a short dodge the moment he entered; so the pack overran the scent, and all was still except the cracking of the underwood as they made their own cast in cover; this gave Tom time to come up, looking thunder, and swear-

ing great guns, and this will give me time to describe Madcap and the grey.

The first was a man an honest six-foot three, about twelve stone in weight; his height made up by an unusual proportion of leg, and as I afterwards saw when walking, he lifted those legs exactly as does a heron; so when he walked up to his horse one could imagine he meant to walk over him. No difficulty here to reach the stirrup; for supposing him at any time to be an unwelcome guest, if a man was sitting at a first-floor window and saw Madcap coming, he would put down the sash lest he should step into the room. His coat was the reverse of being "more for ornament than use," for it had evidently been well, or at least much used, and a Meltonian would have said could never have been ornamental; I could mention some who would have fainted, had they been obliged to show themselves in it at Kirby Gate; its skirts were claret-coloured, shaded off, but relieved by occasional black spots, while the lower edges showed the grey white. His white cravat was well put on; the buttonholes of his light-coloured buff kerseymere waistcoat showed they were not buttoned for the first time; his clean, narrow-ribbed cord breeches were made rather tight, showing a spare thin thigh, and knees like an ostrich's; his boots were well made, and well cleaned; but his foot—it was more like a yard as to length: it seemed never to cease coming out of the stirrup. He wore spurs with very short necks, so one wondered how he could bring them to his horse's flanks; had they been long, I quite believe he could, had he wished, have spurred his horse on his hocks while galloping. He wore a cap not its first season by many, and no gloves; yet (I suppose from some natural cause) his hands were white and gentlemanlike.

He was not handsome; his hair and large whiskers were black, and when closely shaved he was still a black-mugged one; but this was relieved by a fine clear health-showing skin, pearly teeth, and a most winning smile.

The grey was a little one, not more than fifteen and an inch, and evidently far under the weight he carried: of him more anon.

By the time the huntsman came up, the hounds had hit on their fox again, and as all things are fair with such dodging, cowardly, short-running varmint, he was very properly mobbed in all quarters, and who-hoop shortly told us his manœuvres were over.

We found a second fox had gone off from the cover: they hit on him, and their blood being up, and the covers small, though he ran through several, they so "dusted his jacket," that they drove him through them; so we got about thirty-five minutes with scarcely what could be called a check.

Friend Madcap knew little of the country, but a vast deal about hunting, hounds, and these hounds. Such a fellow to get through a cover I never saw. If hounds entered one anywhere near its centre, crash he went into it; and somehow, so sure as they broke, over came he with them. Though, figuratively speaking, always with the hounds, he was too good a sportsman not to avail himself of sound ground, if they crossed such as would distress his horse; but he only carried this so far as still to command them. He was unquestionably the only man, this day, who in technical phrase "stuck close" to them: this with a horse under his weight, and in to him a strange, and to every one an intricate country. He was located where the hounds stayed while in the neighbourhood; I had to pass the same line as them on my

way home, and here began my acquaintance with this extraordinary rider. I complimented him on the truly splendid way the little and indeed beautiful grey had carried him, as also on the way he had kept so close to hounds in such a blind country. He most courteously acknowledged my expressions of admiration of both, and in return gave me the following account of himself and horses:—

"I am not," said he, "a man of fortune, though I have always about half-a-dozen hunters by me. I am in business in London, in the hop trade; but I so manage that absence does not hurt my business, or hunting my pocket. I do not disguise the fact—I make my horses pay for themselves; I am fond of hunting, have good health, and have the credit of strong nerves; the consequence is, every man who knows me (and I am pretty generally known), if he has got a violent, awkward, or vicious horse, brings him to me, and I believe I have had more reprobates in my possession than perhaps any other man. I consequently get good and fine horses very cheap. I generally succeed, somehow or other, in making hunters of them; I cannot then afford to keep them for the pleasure of riding them, and it is known I will sell anything. I never deceive any one; they see how a horse carries me; if they choose to buy him, and find he does not carry them as they like, it is no fault of mine. I often have the same horse two or three times over; I will show you one, on Friday, that I now own for the fourth time: he is the best horse I ever rode, and I really believe the best hunter living, to those who know him; at least, he is so to me."

"Surely," said I, "this horse you are on is all a man could wish."

"I mean him to be nearly so, before I have done with him," said Madcap, "unless any one wishes to buy him as he is. I bought him in the summer. He is sound, six years old, a very superior goer, and, as you have remarked, is very handsome. I bought him for thirty pounds. He had been tried at most things, and would not do *any* thing; he was dangerously vicious to approach in the stable, and violently restive out of it; would merely go the way he liked, sometimes would not go at all, so of course he knew nothing of leaping; he was the most refractory horse I ever had to do with, which is," said Madcap, smiling, "saying a good deal. Carrying my weight as he does, shows him a thorough game horse; for it is really his gameness enables him to do it, and that same game made him fight so hard as he has done to have his own way: I have beat him, not by ill-usage, but patience and determination. He will now in the stable hail those he knows when they go near him; this I brought about by never letting him get a mouthful to eat or drink for weeks, but from the hand; he has now learnt that persons entering his stall was for his benefit. When I first had him, myself and my men relieved each other, and have been ten and twelve hours on his back before we could induce him to go to the left, if he wanted to go to the right. Force would not do; for he would rear, and fall backwards, stand and kick, or lie down; the latter he has often done when *not* forced. We then made him get up, and waited; till at last, wearied out, he turned as directed. I have been hours before I could get him to jump a fence two feet high: he now never attempts to refuse, and I should not fear putting him into the hands of any man who would keep his temper, and yet show determi-

nation; for with another I think it quite likely he would again become tricky."

I thanked him for his hints, and bade him good morning, more than half determined to purchase the grey.

The next hunting day Madcap was mounted on the itinerant hunter he told me had so often changed owners; he quite showed that our friend had no particular "sort" that he patronised; this was the very reverse of the grey: he stood quite sixteen two, perhaps more; could carry any weight that could be supposed to attempt riding, showed direct "half-bred," with the, to me, abomination of all but a rat tail, and looked as unlike a flyer, either at fences or anything else, as need be. Well, thinks I, you must be an impostor of the right sort, to carry your present master as he goes. "I am sure you are admiring my hunter," said Madcap, smiling. "I have no doubt I shall, at humble distance," said I, "if we get a run." He had on a severe twisted snaffle; we were both in a lane close to a cover; a hound or two spoke, then another. "That's good for a hundred," cries Madcap. So it was; out came pug, and crossed the lane. "Tally-ho, away!" screamed our friend. Out came old Songstress, lashing her sides with her stern, hesitated a moment, then came away, the pack at her heels, making the fence out of the cover crack again; into the lane they went. "Yoi over!" cries Madcap. Over they went into the next field; I had bored through a thin part of the fence in good time. "Cum up!" says Madcap, giving his horse a haul, and taking a stiff and very high gate out of the lane; I here joined our friend, and away we went, cheek-by-jowl. "This won't last long, I dare say," said I. Before us was what most men, I for one, should have held to be an impenetrable bullfinch: I saw a very wicked smile on Madcap's face

as we approached it. "Come along," said he to his horse; "it won't spoil your beauty." He went at it twenty miles an hour; a faggot stack could scarcely have stood the charge; the great brute did not trouble himself to rise high enough to reach the weaker part, but went through, as I could imagine a rhinoceros would have done, trusting to strength, and caring little for hide. My task was thus rendered easy, and my thinner-skinned one did not hesitate. We were now on a common. Come, thinks I, now it's my turn; I think I can easily catch, and give you the clean "go by." There are many things easier to meditate than accomplish. Madcap was aware of the advantage of sound turf as well as I; he gave his horse a twist, and I saw his long legs come up to his horse's flanks, like a fire-escape to a second-floor; switch went the nag's tail, and away he strided. By George! thinks I, I have heard a wild elephant can go an astounding pace: I no longer doubt it. Catch him I did, just at the termination of the common: here was the extent of my short-lived triumph. The common ended in some park paling, placed on a high wide bank, together making at least eight feet in height. Come, thinks I, you can't jump that, at any rate. I fully expected our friend meant to dismount, and try how far it might be possible to pull it down; but no such thing: he put elephant straight at it; refusing on the part of the horse seemed never to be contemplated; he jumped on the bank, which afforded only room, and just room, for his four feet to stand on. I saw the horse positively waver on such narrow footing: it was but for a moment; one of Madcap's "cum ups" settled the matter; the horse rose as high as he could, and breasting the paling, which like most old park paling was not very strong, with a crash it gave way, and

the horse came on his nose the other side. A haul, and the "cum up," soon had him in going order, and away they steamed just as if nothing had happened. "Come," says I, "I can say without any fib, I have followed perhaps the boldest and most determined horseman on earth;" but how I did it the reader perceives. A gate on the other side let us out; it was a regular white sound park-gate; luckily it was open, or I make no doubt Madcap would have gone at, and probably cleared it. *Sotto voce*, I should have tried the hinges. We were now among the small enclosures through which ran a brook: I knew it well, and its width in different parts; the hounds were going straight for where it was very wide; straight as they went Madcap; I took the liberty of diverging a little. At it went the pack, some swimming, others jumping as far as they could, and then scrambling out. At it went Madcap, his horse well collected, and one stroke of the double thong sent elephant clean over. I saw our friend look back; I guessed it was for me; but the brook winding towards where I went at a narrower part, I was over even before him: he pointed at me with his whip, as much as to say, "I see the dodge." We shortly killed our fox. A chase seems long in telling, but we had not run more than about four miles as the crow flies. Where was Oldaker all this time? may be asked. Quite near enough to be ready if wanted; and well he rode, but rather wide—quite excusable in him, for he was then an old man. May all fox-hunters be able to ride as well at his age.

I need not trouble the reader with a third run, where we only badgered about a cover running fox, and lost him.

I now asked our friend how it happened a horse, that

nothing seemed to come amiss to, was so often resold. "I will tell you," says he; "he would frighten any man who did not know him well, for in putting him at a fence he gives one the suspicion that he does not mean to take it; and further, he never rises an inch higher than he can possibly avoid; hurdles, or anything that will yield, he invariably hits so hard, you expect he must come down. Yet, as you saw to-day, he is cunning enough to know stiff timber as well as his rider; he will hit that, but not so as to hurt himself or risk falling. He can jump as wide as any horse: still, if you ride him at a ditch four feet wide, he will only just clear it; four or fourteen, he does just the same. I know him, and he knows me, and I don't think when together many can beat us; between you and me, he is not a gentleman's horse, though an extraordinary one; but he has been an income to me."

I was obliged to go to London next day, but promised to meet our friend at the race-course at Ascot, to see the deer turned out, and at the same time a bay mare he intended to ride with the stag-hounds: and well worth seeing she was; she looked all but, if not quite, thorough-bred, well up to thirteen stone; sixteen hands high, quite as good-looking, and not unlike Beeswing; she was fit to carry a monarch; no doubt she had, or had had, some fault or faults, for she looked worth as much as any hunter could be. Our friend was really Melton this day in dress, I suppose in honour of the hunt; he sported a hat, and merely a crop in his hand, without its thong. The stag was uncarted, the hounds laid on; Madcap waved his hand to me, and the mare flew the rails in and out the race-course, going quite in racing form: I trotted up to the Bracknell-road, saw the hounds going straight for Tower-hill, and Madcap of

course as close to them as he could as a sportsman be: there, no doubt, he stayed, no matter where they went.

I shortly left that country. Going some years after to spend a week with my father in Essex, who should I see but Madcap, on a magnificent brown horse. After some conversation, I jokingly said, pointing to his horse, "A reprobate, I suppose." He smiled. "I'll show you," said he, dismounting, and drawing his horse's tongue a little forward, it appeared as if two notches had been cut out each side. "This horse," says he, "has been held as an incorrigible runaway; his tongue has, as you see, been half cut off with whipcord; he has been tortured in all ways, and driven half mad. I have cured him by patience, keeping my temper, and letting him find that if his mouth got punished it was his own fault: he has got quite good-tempered, pulls strong, being a willing goer, but unless when hounds are running, any woman might safely ride him."

Essex—that is, great part of it—is a very blind country, so far as the fences go: but here, as where I had before seen him, he went just the same—namely, first.

I once met him afterwards in Leicestershire, where, strange to say, he had never shown before; and when I say in such a hunt and country the buzz was, "Who is he?" the "way he went" may be surmised.

I often called on him at his house of business in the city, but then went abroad, and then to Ireland. Years passed on: I called on my friend; the warehouse had been turned into a draper's shop, with fine plate-glass windows, a very different genus *homo* showing as its master. Ah, me! during these years how many friends

> "I've seen around me fall,
> Like leaves in wintry weather."

Some time after this, I was one day handed a letter;

"I know the hand," said I; "but let's see." I did see; it ran thus:—

"DEAR HIEOVER,—Since we met at our last fixture, like many a fox I have followed, I have been driven out of my line of country; I have tried all the old earths where I used to find you, but found them closed; I have at last made a wide cast, and have hit you off. I am located in a hunting lodge at ——, North Wales. I have a pack I think you will call of a good sort: I have not a large stud, and my country being hilly they are little ones, but so was your favourite grey. Do come and spend as many weeks with me as you can spare; do not bring any nags, for strange horses could not go here. My wife is anxious to see so old a friend of mine; you know my horses always knew it was no use to refuse, they knew they must go; and I tell you, you must come."

"Humph! married—rather late in the day for you to find, friend Madcap," thought I. "Well, a neat pack, a hunting lodge, and a stud, sound well. I'm heartily glad to hear it, for your sake."

A few weeks after answering Madcap's letter, I started, partly by rail, partly by coach; the latter set me down at one of the sweetest villages imagination could conceive. I asked for my friend's lodge. "It is just over there, sir," said my host, pointing towards the sky, as if it was a balloon I was in search of. "Have you got a chaise I can have?" "We don't keep chaises here," replied the man; "and if we did, it's eight miles to Mr. Madcap's round the road." "Must I walk, then?" said I. "Oh, no! my ponies are at home; you can ride one, and the boy shall carry your bag, and show you the way on the other." The ponies came round, about

eleven hands each, and off we went, the little animals climbing the mountain side like cats. "I suppose," thought I, "there is a vale on the other side, for there's no hunting here." We came in sight of my friend's cottage, perched like a Swiss chalet near the crown of the mountain. I saw Madcap; for there was no mistaking him; onwards he came to meet us, lifting his legs, as if the next step would put one foot on my head.

"A Welsh and English welcome, and many of them," said he, seizing my hand. "I've been too many for you," said he; "but all's fair in friendship, as well as in love or war." We entered his beautiful cottage, rendered perfect by the taste of a refined woman, for such I found his wife, who welcomed me as a known friend; and now the secret came out. Some years before, a large speculation had all but ruined my friend; he was now in years, but hale as ever; a small income he had, and another on his wife's part made up about £250 a year; with this he had retired to his present abode. His pack was about ten couple of the neatest little beagles eyes could look on, whose music in this romantic country sounded beautiful, echoed and re-echoed as it was: a couple of very pretty ponies about twelve hands high, and strong as little cart-horses, and one *actually* thirteen, in honour of my friend's long legs, were his stud; I need scarcely say his hunting was on foot, and the little cry seldom missed killing their hare. Here he showed me what spearing a particular salmon-like fish was; he, in a pair of water-tight boots, waded into the stream, and in truth he could have crossed the Thames at low water in some places, without being up to his hips; so long legs are useful in some places. But his beagles were his hobbies; his stable hobbies were chiefly for the use of his wife and household, though I once here saw him

mounted, when I rode one of the tiny ones, and the lady the other. He seemed contented; yet the mention of former days, like the memory of a dear friend, brought forth a saddened feeling he strove to repress. I stayed with him a week, and leaving him, rejoiced to see the once daring meteor of many fields could find solace in the little means left him of enjoying at least a type of the "ruling passion."

DOING THE NATIVES.

"Turning the stud to account!" "Accommodating a friend!" or many other titles, would have served for the following subject. I choose the one made use of, from the following circumstance giving me the cue:—I was supping a few evenings since with a party of five; myself, as I must suppose, a kind of make-weight, constituting the sixth. It was professedly an oyster supper —an entertainment usually made by the class of men of whom the donor was one, a somewhat expensive affair. True, there stood the veritable barrel, a true type of the spirit of the "provoke;" but the grouse, the "volaille au" this, the "jus au" that, the "consommé au" the other, and the little sweetened and devilled adjuncts, were enough to "astonish the natives," even before they were opened, as much as we may conclude the operation of walking into their pearly stronghold astonished them in its execution. They say a proper and gentlemanly apology will excuse most acts; query, an apology from a knife to an oyster.

One of the party suddenly stopped in a most devastating havoc he had been making among the shell-fish, and, looking at a betting-book, ruminated for a moment. "Pardon me!" he said to the host, put up his book, and resumed his attack.

"What," said the former, "you're thinking of victimising the flats, are you?"

"Is not our friend hard on the innocent?" said the oyster eater, addressing his right-hand neighbour. "Do I look like victimising any one?"

"Certainly not!" replied the one addressed; "though you certainly show great capability in doing the natives!"

I promised to head some article it might suit with the *jeu d'esprit*. I have done so.

It was late in the afternoon of an autumnal day, that a light mail phaeton, drawn by a pair of very highly-bred posters, in high condition, rattled over the hard chalky road of a small straggling town, or very large village, in the lower part of Somersetshire. The road not being one leading regularly from post town to post town, a strange carriage was rather an unusual sight; and a strictly aristocratic-looking and fashionably-dressed young man on its seat, and his valet, whom the good folks of the village held as a gentleman also, in the dickey, were objects to which they were as little accustomed. Neither of the passengers was, however, a perfect stranger; they had been seen the preceding year, and if report speaks true, Mr. Dupré, the valet, had caused more than one rustic beauty to show a temporary coldness to her honester, more sincere, but far less civilised, *affiancé*. Many a kiss of the hand, given with the same grace as if intended for a fair denizen of Park Lane, did the young aristocrat telegraph to some pretty but sunburnt face as his vehicle whirled by, and many such faces blushed rosy red, and were bashfully withdrawn, from a feeling their owners hardly understood, and certainly could not explain, even to themselves. "Oh! it's the young Lord going again to the Hall,"

solved any inquiry; for a Lord they would have him to be, though choosing to be called plain Mr. Hopetown. His motives for the concealment they felt confident he adopted, were accounted for in various ways: one and all, however, united in their admiration of him, nor did they mean to convey other impressions, in announcing with a smile, and intended knowing look, that he was "A nointed one, they'd warrant." Round the turn in the private road to the Hall flew the compact *cortége*, and "he" was gone. "He!" With what rapidity does thought flit through the human brain! What a gush of feeling will not a moment sometimes carry to the heart! "He" could be nothing to the grown or budding beauties of that sequestered spot; but, however lowly may be her lot, there is a delicacy in the mind of woman that teaches her to admire any object showing a refinement to which she is unaccustomed. Thus rapid as had been the flight of our young Giaour through the village, though it might not produce so futile an aspiration as, that "Heaven had made her such a man," it sufficed to produce comparison that brought on a feeling closely allied to mortification and altered sentiments, and many a head was that night laid on its pillow with the heart less contented with its lot.

The perusal of any anecdote or circumstance is usually attended by an impressible desire to know how far either may be fictitious, grounded on fact, or fact itself. It is not, perhaps, in the generality of cases, of much import to ascertain either particular; for if what is written, "points a moral or adorns a tale," its being fiction or the reverse matters little. Should, however, the reader think it worth his while in this case to put the enquiry, I am at liberty to answer it. The names are changed, the locality also; but the occurrences were

facts, with very trifling alterations, to prevent recognition of persons, except to a very few.

I have said enough of my hero's personal appearance: but I must give a very brief history of him, that the anecdote respecting him may meet some palliation from extraneous circumstances.

His father had amassed a considerable fortune in India, where he died, leaving the whole at the disposal of his widow, and leaving also an only son, the hero of the tale, then ten years old. Both returned to England, where prudence on the part of the widow, in pecuniary expenditure, increased the property she intended for her son. Had her prudence been extended to a proper guard over the youth's conduct, I should not have had the anecdote in question to lay before my readers. It is mentioned as a warning, not a mere relation of incident; for though his manners, pleasantry, accomplishments, and good humour threw a false colour on whatever he did, it amounted to little more than a certain feeling which, against our sense of propriety, prevents our holding Macheath as what he really was—a thief and villain.

A precocity of intellect and talent enabled our young hero to acquire that education necessary and accomplishments desirable in a gentleman at a very early age. When other boys were spinning a top, his higher impulse induced him to practise the violin; and while others revelled at foot or trap ball, he studied the guitar and singing, with Spanish and Italian, so as to be master of the sonnet of either country. At sixteen he was a man in height, in manners, and education. Well would it have been had his precocity ended here; but it did not. He asked for no boyish indulgence, but seized on such as men partook of. While his mother

held him as a mere boy, he had long had a fair *entretenu* from the Opera, a very small but fashionable house in Mayfair, a stud of hunters, and a string of debts enough to frighten a man of mature years; he was known to, and in the books of, every Jew who was disposed to advance him money. The end was, at twenty-one, he came nominally into four thousand a-year, of which he could not call one his own, and of ten thousand in ready money, he had had about three, for which he had given acknowledgments for the whole. Now was the friend wanting to tell him to set these harpies at defiance, pay them what he had had, and dare what malice they might show; but youths or men of our hero's turn, will listen to no friends but such as help to plunder them.

He was only twenty-seven at the time I introduce him to my readers, ruined beyond redemption; but it is not to be supposed his ten years' career had left him the mere extravagant boy, open to all sorts of pillage. No; he was now the wary man, and turned the tables, not merely on those he had suffered by, but on the world, into which he had learned to think men were sent to prey on each other.

A very different person was the inhabitant of the Hall. He was twenty-five years young Hopetown's senior; had been a friend of his father's and served in a diplomatic situation in India; returned after a couple of years' stay there: had married, and lost his young wife in the first year of his marriage—a blow he never recovered. He quitted the gay world, retired to the Hall, an old-fashioned place, where, in the cultivation of his land, in field sports, and his books, he spent about seven hundred out of one thousand pounds a-year. Time had softened down his feelings into fond remembrance, calm regret, and cheerful resignation. Respect for the father had produced in Mr.

Herbert an attachment to the son. He deplored his errors; but was willing to believe the head, or rather the force of circumstances more in fault than the heart; and to a great degree he was right. Our hero had from time to time laid this good friend under somewhat heavy contributions, in various ways. Still the latter's kind heart and liberal feelings formed excuses where his judgment could but condemn.

A third personage must be mentioned as one who had greatly contributed to render Hopetown the man he had become; this was Mr. Sharp, his solicitor, agent, and pretended friend, shield and buckler. He managed all money negociations, in each of which he reaped a harvest, large or small. At an enormous sacrifice to his client's resources, he kept him at liberty, excepting occasionally for a day or two; then some fresh loan was negociated, and the attorney on either side well paid himself; and this system Mr. Sharp intended to keep going so long as his client could by false appearances keep his credit going also. Hopetown was too keen to be deceived by the specious protestations of his agent. He knew him to be a villain; but he was useful in ways in which a respectable man would not act, and in acts in which such a one would not meddle.

The motives of Hopetown's present annual visit was first to put his friend Herbert in confidence as regarded various sums lent from time to time; secondly, to purchase, *on promise*, or make some exchange for anything he might be disposed to part from, in the shape of horse, carriage, dog, gun, watch, ring, snuff-box, or any thing or things convertible into cash, in London; thirdly, to sell him a couple of horses; and fourthly, under some plan to borrow money, which he well knew Mr. Herbert had always at command.

As the phaeton stopped at the Hall door, a well-appointed groom and stable-lad were at its side in a moment, touching their hats to one who was ever welcomed by servants wherever he went. Hopetown acknowledged them in a way in which he "won all hearts." The old gardener even welcomed the newly-arrived guest. "Well, old respectable," says Hopetown, "you're still in the land of the living, I see!" The bell brought to the door another well-known acquaintance in the person of Mary, the parlourmaid, for Herbert kept no footman. "Well, Mary," said Hopetown, after getting down and shaking her by the hand; "pretty and good tempered as ever, eh?" Whether it was present feeling or remembrance of the past that caused a deep suffusion over every visible part of the skin of the pretty Mary, is not for me to inquire into; but blush she did, and drew back from the gaze of her fellow-servants.

"Ten shillings, is it not?" said Hopetown to the postboy. "There, take that," chucking him a sovereign, "and don't be two hours over the stage the next time you drive me!"

"Not quite fifty minutes, sir!" said the boy, smiling, and standing uncovered.

"Two hours, you rascal, by Gad!" says Hopetown, entering the house.

"Master's gone up to the new cover, Sir," said the still blushing Mary.

"Then bring in a cover for me of some sort, *ma belle!*" said Hopetown; "for I'm starving!"

What delayed Mary a minute or more in the room—what caused her to run so affectedly and precipitately from it—what caused her to stand at an open window ere she met the eye of the other females of the esta-

blishments, conjecture whispers; but the true historian does not trust to such dubitable evidence, so he leaves it to the reader's imagination.

Mr. Herbert, having been apprised of his guest's arrival, immediately returned from his after-dinner walk, and found our hero busy at his repast.

"Well, my honourable!" said the latter; "you see I bring a Somersetshire appetite from London, and you produce London delicacies in Somerset. Brought two or three trifles I shall beg your acceptance of; two or three for you to buy, and will take any thing off your hands you don't like; there are customers to be found for everything we like to take to 'the village'!"

Wine was ordered, coffee and cigars succeeded, racing news and anecdote from Hopetown accompanied them, and Roman punch of his concocting finished the first evening at the Hall.

"By the bye," said Hopetown, the next morning, at breakfast, stopping the threatened tap on the end of his egg, "you wrote to desire me to get you a horse fit to carry you in this country. I did not forget your commission; but in the first place, a horse clever enough for you in this intricate part of the country is not easily met with; for nothing short of a colossal cat could ensure crossing it safely: in truth, I tried all the hunting dealers' stables. Since that I have been with my good mother, who is to let me have a thousand at Christmas; so, old friend, you must just let me have a couple of hundred to carry on the war; for I have promised her not to raise money again at the ruinous interest I have hitherto paid. But we will talk of this another time," said Hopetown, who was too good a tactician to press his leading object.

He had broken the ice, held out the prospect, or, as

he represented it, the certainty, of his getting money, in a couple of months, and had stated his wishes. He thus left his friend to digest the matter at his leisure.

"Not being able," said Hopetown, "to find you a horse suited to this country, I have brought down two of my own; they are everything you could wish; in fact, the nicest animals I ever had. Lord Chesterton wanted both; but I told him I had promised one or both to you. You shall ride them; for my dog-cart comes with them, as I intend crossing the country to * * * *. So the horse that brings it will carry me, if we have nothing very fast as a run. By the bye," continued he, "the nags ought to be here, or very near by this time. I told my fellows to do the ninety miles in two days, and eighteen this morning; for the horses being rather short of work, they will be all the better for their journey."

We will now look a little at Hopetown's character and deeds as a sportsman, his practice in speculative considerations, and afford a hint as to the truth of what he averred, as regards his animals, men, carriages, and the purposes each were intended to be put to, that is, if his intentions should "come off."

First, then, he hunted; not that he cared about it as a sport or amusement, but, being a particularly fine and very bold rider, he turned these attributes to good account; and many who bought his horses at very high prices, might as well have bought Paganini's violin under the idea of being, like him, able to perform wonders with it. He kept a strong stud, not that he wanted them, but he knew others would: and by having several, and those each possessing peculiar qualifications, he could hit all tastes and predilections. He

was tenacious as a woman of any exposure of his person to fatigue, deprivation, or danger; but where anything was to be gained, he set all at defiance, and was daring to recklessness. His horses were all extraordinary in some particular, and that one he knew well how to turn to account. For instance, the two he had brought down were not worth a rush in a good and fast country, but could take a gate if set up in the stable; were clever and safe as cats at any blind or awkward fences, and, like most animals he possessed, imposing in appearance, both as regarded looks and condition. Hopetown had always an eye to a bet; so whatever he had could be backed to do something extraordinary, and extraordinary in a way least expected of it. Thus, if he got hold of a trotter looking at all like hunting, a hunter he made and called him—boasted of his perfections in this way—said not a word about his trotting, until some conversation happened to take this turn; then he pretended to treat fourteen miles an hour as nothing, and avowed he would not own a horse that would not do it. "Why," he would say, "any hunter I have, would, I am sure, do that." A bet usually ensued—done!—and odds were taken he did more. And then out came the secret—four miles had been done by *the hunter*, so called, in fourteen minutes. The horse he merely called his buggy-horse was usually the fastest of his stud — in fact, a racehorse of no mean pretensions. If he was seen with a strong, heavy-looking, weight-carrying cob he was a singular animal that would take eighteen feet of water or clear an ordinary turnpike gate. With such tools to work with, he was always on the dodge, and a hundred betted by him was a certain hundred lost; his men were too well instructed to talk—when they did, they knew their cue.

Hopetown shot—had practised till every description of firearm was equally effective in his hands. Many would have been vain, and boasted of such extraordinary proficiency: not he. He *confessed* himself a very *indifferent* shot. If he took any man's gun in hand but his own, he took care to miss far oftener than he hit; with his own he killed to a certainty. This brought his guns into vogue, and he accommodated his friends and acquaintances with them; yet he ever had some extraordinary killer to replace the former one. His dogs were all singularly clever in some points, and he knew where and when to show these off. The terrier that followed his horses was certain to be one that could kill rats in as great number in a given time as the best dogs of the London rat-pits. If he had a horse given to "bolting off" in harness, he would take care to show him in a situation where he would have no inducement to do so; and would also show him going without winkers. Few seeing a horse thus driven would even ask if he was quiet; if he did, the Jesuitical observation of "I think you may judge of that yourself," saved a downright falsehood. In short, in "*doing*," no man could promise himself to be a match for Hopetown; yet he did all in a way that only left his victims in a position to blame their own want of foresight, without being able to attach absolute deception to the other. If they were discontented with anything they got from him, he most handsomely stated his perfect willingness to have it again, and give another, or something else in lieu of it; in such case, Mr. Done was sure to be doubly done *somehow*.

"Your horses are come, sir," said Mary, bringing in an "omelette aux fines herbes" as an adjunct to the breakfast.

"True to the touch," replied Hopetown; "my men know I like punctuality."

"Yes," said Herbert, laughing; "in fact, you value it so highly, my good fellow, that it is very rarely you use it."

"A palpable hit!" observed Hopetown, giving the one he had delayed on the top of his egg. "By-the-bye," added he, "talking of hitting, indifferent shot as you know I am, I have brought a couple of guns with me that I never miss with. What do you say to a stroll after breakfast, as we cannot hunt till to-morrow?"

"Agreed," replied his friend; "but will it be quite fair on your horses not to give them one day's rest after their journey?"

"Many would require it," said his guest; "but those I have brought will only be the better for the exercise."

Here a little by-play on the part of Master Hopetown must be laid before the reader. The assertion of his nags having come ninety miles in two days, and eighteen by ten o'clock on the following morning, was one of his white fibs; they had leisurely travelled little more than twenty miles a day, and ten on the morning of their arrival.

Breakfast over, Mr. Herbert proposed a look into the stables; but his guest, who had always a motive in all he did, begged a little delay while he fetched his dressing-case. Now, he had a threefold motive in thus delaying the time: it gave his men opportunity to get the horses quite right after their morning's walk; he was not without hopes of being able to get Herbert to purchase the case he spoke of, which was complete, gentlemanly, and useful, without being too ornamental; and, again, he wished to propitiate his host by the present he had mentioned before.

Here it must be observed that Hopetown was a perfect adept in all the secrets and manœuvres carried on in jewellery and all articles of taste; could not be deceived himself, but knew all the tricks practised to deceive the uninitiated; knew every setting and every appropriate foil used to make emerald, ruby, or carbuncle out of an ordinary piece of crystal. With such he was ever supplied for the purposes of presents, exchanges, sale, or as a stake against money in any case where he considered the result of a bet doubtful. Rarely, indeed, was the counterfeit detected; if it was, he vowed he had been imposed on in the purchase, or laughed it off as a sporting affair. Few would venture to make it a serious one; if so, it was well known that attempting an impeachment of Hopetown's honour would be answered by being called before his pistol's muzzle, an alternative rather too dangerous to suit the move of the generality of those who knew him.

From the dressing-case alluded to—a plain Russian leathern one, containing what was absolutely necessary, and nothing more, for dressing—he took a very handsome, plainly-set ruby.

"I think, Herbert," said he, "I know your taste—'rich, but not gaudy.' This ruby was my grandmother's; I have had it reset. Accept it as a trifling memento of all your kindness to my unworthy self."

The ring was accepted, and as Hopetown anticipated, the perfect compactness of the travelling dressing-case struck Mr. Herbert's attention. A little jocose bartering took place between the friends, which eased his host of a lot of sundries he had no occasion for, at a rate that paid, or would pay, about a hundred per cent. on the original cost of the dressing-case. Deduct about two pounds, the value of the ring, and add the credit of

making a present estimated at thirty, it will leave a very pretty balance in Hopetown's favour as a beginning of a day's dealing.

A stroll now was made to the stables; and there stood Hopetown's three nags, neat and spicy, as if they had not stirred from a stall that morning.

"Not looking much the worse for their journey," said Hopetown to his friend, and patting the horse he particularly wished to call his attention to. "This is the horse I have brought for you; you shall ride him to-morrow. I will ride the other." And turning to his servant: "You may give Splinterbar (meaning his buggy horse) a canter with the hounds: it will be as good exercise for him as any other."

"The best single-harness horse in England," said Hopetown, addressing his friend.

"He ought to be a hunter," remarked Mr. Herbert.

"Not fast enough," replied his friend; "harness is his trade."

This arrangement being settled, shooting was voted for the morning's pursuit.

Hopetown took out his brace of splendid-looking pointers, and, on their calling on a neighbour, he joined them, bringing a third dog.

One of Hopetown's dogs, like most of his possessions, was extraordinary in his way. This dog, in ranging, never kept his eye for two successive moments off his master, and was constantly seen turning his head towards him.

"I never saw a dog so careful as that in my life," remarked the stranger.

"He is so," said Hopetown; "and I think I can show you in him a specimen of perfect breaking you never saw before."

The dog was ranging to the left, cast an eye on his master: a wave of the hand sent him instantly to the right, a counter-sign sent him back to the left. This was done several times, the dog turning as short as does Mr. Batty's horse in the circle on the given signal.

"Extraordinary!" exclaimed both gentlemen.

"I can show you a little more than this," said Hopetown.

The dog was now in full career. Hopetown beckoned him; in a few strides he stood before his master, looking him in the face.

"Wonderful!" was the second ejaculation.

Hopetown now made a downward motion of his hand; the dog dropped on the instant, and lay watching his master's very look.

"Would price tempt you to let me have him?" said the neighbour.

"Yes," was the reply; "but, of course, it must be a very strong one."

A *very* strong one was named, and the dog changed masters.

Now, the history of the dog was this: he was, on the whole, not better than the others, or, to those who knew him, worse—he was *deaf as a post*. His ears being useless to him, he had become thus watchful with his eyes, and obeyed signal where others attended to call; and this gave the impression of his being more highly trained than any other, and his constant watchfulness prevented (except under very peculiar circumstances) his infirmity being detected. He was, in short, a fair ten guinea dog, and no more; the extra three tens given were a specimen of most of his master's sales.

Many, or at all events some, of my readers most probably recollect that in the entertainment of "Giovanni

in London," on the Don's introduction to the Queen's Bench, a *gentleman* there asked of him the loan of a sovereign. This was instantly given. "I wished I had asked him for two," said the scamp. Somewhat of a similar feeling influenced Hopetown on the ready sale of the deaf pointer. "Their galleys blaze, why not their city too?" so said the Corsair: "The pointer's sold, why not the Manton too?" so thought Hopetown.

I have stated he was an unerring shot; the neighbour was not. Hopetown never missed a bird the whole morning; the other missed about five out of six. It was now getting late.

"Try my gun," said Hopetown; "I am but a bad shot, but I seldom miss with that and another I have."

They changed. Hopetown's lucky star was in the ascendant. A covey rose close at hand: bang! bang! went Hopetown's barrels, in the neighbour's hands, and down came a brace. Hopetown fired off his borrowed ones, and took care not to disturb a feather.

"Changing tools does not suit a bad workman," said Hopetown, smiling,

Three more shots were fired by each gentleman, the neighbour bagging a brace, Hopetown missing all.

"I make no doubt but the fault is mine, and not your gun's," said Hopetown; "but I cannot hit a bird with it."

"And I," said the neighbour, "never shot in my life as I have with yours."

I need not trouble the reader with particulars; but the Manton went to the same home as its old companion the pointer, and at about as moderate a price.

The next day saw Hopetown's three horses with the hounds, mounted as he proposed; Mr. Herbert intro-

ducing his guest to a couple of friends, and getting their promise to dine with him the same day.

Hopetown and his man both rode their horses as it might be termed, in racing phrase, "to order,"—that is, with a certain object in view. The first took care so to ride as to let his friend keep the lead of him; yet he also took care to show off the jumping powers of the horse he rode. The man was ordered to keep quite among the second-place set. One of the friends invited to dinner was a very young man, whom the penetrating observation of Hopetown soon detected as piquing himself on the speed of his horse and going "first flight." Our hero narrowly watched him, and in point of fencing "set him;" in other terms, "rode at him;" and at last, at one most formidable fence, fairly "pounded" him. At another part of the run, in which the young one had been making injudiciously free with his horse, Hopetown, seeing him in temporary "difficulty," seized the golden moment, and, on a far slower, but fresher nag, gave his new acquaintance the "go-by." This was all he wanted, as the result will prove. The fox was killed, and the gentleman met at dinner.

When during the evening the day's sport was mentioned, Mr. Herbert was complimented on the way he had been carried. This was "nuts" in the dessert for Hopetown, and caused a memorandum to be set down in his mind to name an extra ten guineas in the price.

"Yes," said our hero, "I think Meteor quite worthy of his name; and," said he, turning to the young guest, "that is a clever horse of yours, though not a fast one."

"Excuse me," replied the somewhat nettled owner, "I consider him the fastest in the hunt."

"Except, for one, the horse I rode," said Hopetown.

"Oh!" rejoined the owner, "my horse was a little

blown at the moment; but I should like to run you for a hundred."

"I do not want to win your money to a dead certainty," said Hopetown; "but to show I give a candid opinion of your horse's speed, I will run you for two hundred, if you like, even with my buggy-horse, that you saw my servant ride."

"Done!" cried the young one, his blood mounting to his face at the supposed indignity offered his flyers.

The next day but two was named, over a mile and a-half of a neighbouring course.

"You may book your two hundred gone, Hopetown," said Mr. Herbert; "P——'s horse is very fast, I can tell you."

"If he is," replied his guest, "I forfeit all claim to judgment in such matters" (for he did not even let his friend into the secret).

Weights were not alluded to; but as owners were to ride, Hopetown's quick eye told him he had a good seven pounds in his favour, otherwise so important a point would not have passed unheeded by him.

At the starting-post, more than one remarked "the buggy-horse" did not look unlikely to "go;" one or two knowing ones put on the "pot" in his favour. They started, the young one making play at his best. While running, the majority of those present voted "the buggy-horse" and Hopetown's judgment and presumption all quite out-paced; coming into straight running, however, Hopetown was seen evidently drawing on his antagonist, at half distance collared him, and in spite of steel and whipcord won as he liked.

A knowing look passed from a few to Hopetown, as he quietly walked his horse up to his cloths; and one who had pocketed a few "ponies" whispered to Hope-

town, "Glenartny—mum!" The initiated will guess by this how the case stood.

The truly astonished and discomfited owner of the beaten nag now began to doubt whether, should he in future call his horse "The Flyer," one of his slang friends might answer "Walker!" He offered to buy the buggy-horse.

"No," said Hopetown; "he is not, as you suppose, fast; nor is he a hunter; so I shall keep him for my gigger. But I will have a deal with you for the horse I rode, and," added he, "beat you on, when hunting; he really is, as a hunter, first rate."

The deal was made—Hopetown getting a hundred and a better horse than his; the buggy-horse being bottled for some other chance.

Having thus done more business in a short time than he anticipated, a letter next morning afforded a pretext of being obliged to return to The Village. We will now take a mercantile look at the results of the trip.

He had got the credit of making a £30 present for about £2.

Had exchanged a £16 dressing-case for sundries that would be sold for £30.

Sold a pointer, cost £10, at £40.

Sold a second-hand Manton, bought at £20, for £50.

Sold Meteor, cost £90, at £200.

Won on the race, £200.

Got for a second horse, cost 100 gs., a better horse and £100.

Borrowed of Mr. Herbert, £200.

This sent him back flush to town, and well enabled him to keep up golden opinions among Mr. Herbert's servants, by giving them five sovereigns. What he gave Mary is a secret between her, him, and myself.

What little business Mr. Dupré, his valet, did on his own account, in a minor way, among the natives we will not investigate; and what Hopetown's groom made on the race, matters not to the reader of this article. It was, however, several times over what the writer gets by producing it.

"Bye, bye! old fellow," said Hopetown, kissing his hand from the drag next morning. "By George! you got a bit the best of me in getting Meteor at £200; Chesterton would have given me £300."

"Now, get on, you sir," said he to the post-boy; "and don't be a week going the eight miles, as you were coming. Go along, ye cripples!" said he, stooping forward, and giving each horse a tap with his cane. "Bye, bye!"—the "Herbert" was lost in the sound of the whirling wheels.

DARE DEVILS.

It is many, very many years since the earlier part of the following scenes took place, and not a few since the latter came off. Of all those characterized, one only remains. The old hall where Graceless played his youthful pranks is now in stranger hands; its former owners long numbered with the dead. The worthy Precept has only left behind an example of how a man should live and die. The hall where O'Rourke told his story is now

A "banquet-hall deserted."

But if we have not many reminiscences to gild the recollections of former scenes, we will not conjure up sad ones to depress the heart. The scenes represented actually took place: by whom enacted matters to, perhaps, no one living, but the actor of them.

Hearing a troop of equestrian performers of some celebrity were coming into the neighbourhood, I thought I could work the incidents into the form of a little interlude. I did so; and the largest barn, I believe, in the county was lent as a skeleton theatre. The manager was not above (a most unusual case) taking such hints as to his *mise en scène* as rendered the thing more tolerable to sportsmen's patience than I ever saw a similar attempt at sporting subject in London, all and every one of which are intolerable.

Though the time of the race in its real form lasted but one day, the run of the piece lasted the fortnight the troop stayed, and was really played to overflowing houses, the last night more than a bumper, for the house could not admit the number of applicants; but duty in another place called the manager away. He has long since performed his last part: a few time-worn sheets of paper have outlived the man: from those records spring the present article.

SCENE.—*A room in* SIR JOHN FOXHALL'S *house.* SIR JOHN *and* MR. PRECEPT *at chess.* LADY FOXHALL *at work.*

SIR JOHN [*rising*]. Check-mate! and very neatly done, Mr. Precept. I wonder where Graceless is! in some mischief no doubt.

MR. PRECEPT. I left him, Sir John, busily employed in manufacturing a pair of saddle-girths of unusual length. On my asking him for what they were intended, he merely replied, "To witch the world with noble horsemanship!" But his intentions it would be difficult to divine.

SIR JOHN. I was in hopes your experience in tuition would have worked some reformation in him; but really he gets wilder every day.

LADY F. Come, Sir John, don't be too hard on Graceless. Recollect you were a boy once, and I think I may infer were wild enough.

SIR JOHN. Perhaps I had my harmless pranks as well as others.

LADY F. Among others, the having at eighteen three racehorses on the sly, with a pretty little establishment of hunters, and a *danseuse* purloined from the Opera to grace a very tasteful cottage five miles from Cambridge.

Sir John. Scandal, love; sheer scandal. But, if true, how soon I bowed to the influence of superior attraction.

Lady F. Whim, love; mere whim. And if true, how long may we calculate on its duration?

Sir John. Come, come; don't be severe. No man, they say, is a hero in the eyes of his valet.

Lady F.—And no man is a saint in the eyes of his wife, if she knows the world.

[*Voices from without: "Let her go!" "She'll break your neck, Master* Graceless." "*Break my grandmother! Let her go! Capital! go it, you cripple!*"]

[Graceless *passes the window in a gallop on a cow saddled and bridled.*

Sir John. By heaven! there is Graceless on one of the heifers.

Lady F. Pray, Mr. Precept, run! The boy will be killed! [Graceless *appears at the window.*

Graceless. Capital goer, governor; mean to hunt her next winter. Only wants to be a little clearer in her pipes. "Action undeniable," as Mr. Catchem, the dealer, says.

Lady F. Get off, my dear boy, I entreat you.

Graceless.—"Born your slave, I live but to obey you." I'm off. [*Gallops off.*

Mr. Precept. I hope, Lady Foxhall, you are now convinced my pupil is not one to be easily controlled; and yet, on the score of attention to his studies, he is all I could wish. Depend on it, Sir John, wild and indomitable as he is, he will turn out an accomplished scholar and a finished gentleman.

[Graceless *appears at the door.* Precept, *having dropped his handkerchief, stoops to pick it up.*

GRACELESS. Capital back, by George!

[*Vaults over* PRECEPT'S *back.*

PRECEPT. I trust, sir, I may never again witness in you an act of similar rudeness. [*Stoops again, and again* GRACELESS *performs the same feat.*] By heaven, sir, such insolence a second time is not to be tolerated!

[*Again stoops.*

GRACELESS. Then "here goes another." [*Jumps.*] "Och! there's luck in odd numbers, says Rory O'More!"

[PRECEPT *says nothing, but, looking enraged, pursues* GRACELESS. *He jumps between* SIR JOHN *and* LADY F., *and stands at the back of the sofa.*

GRACELESS. It's no use, Pedagogus; you may as well "book it." [SIR JOHN *jumps up.* GRACELESS *takes a run down the stage and jumps out of window.*] Can't wait to apologise. Going to take a ride. See you when I come back. Adieu! [*Runs off.*

Enter SERVANT *with a note.*

SIR JOHN. From Lord Rattleem [*reads*]. "My dear Sir John,—Myself and friends are proposing to give a cup to be run for in a steeple-chase for galloways, to be ridden by the young gentlemen of the neighbourhood. I have put you down as a subscriber. I trust you will permit your son to enter, and doubt not, in that case, his bearing off the prize. Yours truly, Rattleem."

LADY F. I hope, Sir John, you will not permit Graceless to do anything of the sort.

SIR JOHN. Why, I hardly see how we can refuse. Graceless is known to have the best galloway in the country, has ridden him two seasons with the hounds, is the best rider of any boy in the neighbourhood, has often ridden my horses since, and our family having

kept hounds for half-a-century, it would really disgrace the blood of the Foxhalls to let a member of the family refuse the challenge. We must accept it; though I suppose, Precept, you will join Lady Foxhall in condemning both this and all steeple-chases.

Precept. No, Sir John, I am not so prejudiced as you may suppose. It is true, such pursuits are not in my way; but I would wish to look at all things fairly and dispassionately. I admire a display of courage and energy as much as any man, and as a characteristic sport of the country. I can even admire a steeple-chase, when fairly carried out; but I have read enough to know that it is not always so, but is often converted into a means of direct robbery; and when it is so, instead of a manly sport, it becomes as contemptible as any other mode of picking a pocket.

Sir John. Spoken like a man! Why, Precept, you are, I find, a true sportsman at heart, after all.

[*Enter young* Graceless *on his Galloway.* Lady F. *slightly screams.*

Graceless. Beg pardon; "hope I don't intrude." Oh, governor! such news! Couldn't wait to get off Alexander: rode straight through the hall. There's to be a steeple-chase. Bet what you like I win the cup. Don't look so glump, Pedagogus; I'll drink your health in it.

Sir John. How dare you, sir, ride into the drawing-room and frighten your mother to death?

Graceless. "I dare do all that may become a man." Mamma is not frightened a bit, and I shall present the cup to her.

Lady F. Really, Graceless, a cup would be no recompense for seeing you risk your limbs, and perhaps life, in this odious steeple-chase.

GRACELESS. Don't call it odious. You won't say so when you see the cup on the sideboard.

LADY F. Indeed I should, just the same.

GRACELESS. I hope not; for if you did, do you know what losers would say?

LADY F. Not I, indeed.

GRACELESS. Well, then, I'll tell you. They'd say you had got a cup too much. [*All laugh.*

PRECEPT. Come, Lady Foxhall, you will, I'm sure, forgive my pupil, if only for his repartée.

GRACELESS. Bravo! Pedagogus. I'll make interest with Lord Rattleem to appoint you to start us. I think I see you; light riding trousers, cut-away Newmarket coat, waistcoat extra length, blue bird's-eye choker, racing (cap and whip) brooch, lily castor, &c. "What odds against Alexander?" "3 to 1." "Take you in ponies." "Take it again if you like." "Done." Better than gold-digging: make money in half the time. Alexander wins all the way. There's independence for life for you, old chap.

LADY F. Bless the boy, how he goes on! Do, dear Graceless, give up all thoughts of it. Suppose you meet some frightful fence to clear?

GRACELESS. Why, then it's clear we take it. Alexander never baulks. I'd as soon ride him at a brook as at that sofa. Capital thought! By-the-bye, I never tried him at one. Here goes. Sit still. I'll charge the one you're on. [*They rise. He goes over it.*

SIR JOHN. Do, Precept, catch and stop him.

[PRECEPT *tries, but Alexander bites at him. Both pursue him.*

GRACELESS. Alexander wins for a hundred!

[*Jumps through the window.*

SIR JOHN. This last feat is conclusive nothing but a

school can hold that boy. Come, love, you must not sit in this draught any longer. Come, Precept. [*Rings.*

Enter SERVANT.

SIR JOHN. See that that window is repaired as soon as possible. Master Graceless has just rode through it.

[*Exeunt.*

SERVANT. Gad, but that's something like an Irish ejectment—making a place too hot or too cold for people to live in. It's quicker than the law, by odds.

Enter SIR JOHN'S HUNTSMAN.

TOM DAREALL. They told me Sir John wanted me.

SERVANT. Perhaps he does; but you see he has found it inconvenient to wait here to see you. Young master jumped Alexander through the window.

TOM D. Well, he's a nointed one, and no mistake.

Enter GRENOUILLE.

GRENOUILLE. Eh, mon Dieu! Vat have ve dare?

SERVANT. Why, not much, for Master Graceless has carried most of it with him. He's jumped, horse and all, through it.

GRENOUILLE. Ah, I hear von grand crash. I come to see vat de mattere. Parbleau! you English all mad vith your jomp ven you get on de horse. I hear there is going to be von of your steeple-races next month. You English all mad that vay.

TOM D. And a very good way too. Your people would be better fellows than they are if they took a lesson from us.

GRENOUILLE. Take a you care, Monsieur Dareall, ve do not come to take de lesson more soon dan it may be agreeable to you.

Tom D. Oh! is that the time o' day? Well, then, I'll just tell you what it is, Mounseer Greenowl, we've no objection to give you lessons in steeple-chasing in your own country, and have done so, but don't you come to take 'em here unless you're invited; for if you do, you'll find there's a brook between your country and ours, that before you may be able to clear in your way back will enable us to give you a lesson in chasing of another sort, that will not quite agree with your constitution. Mind ye, we're very glad to see you as friends; but don't presume too much on general invitation; for in that case you won't be disappointed in finding us "out," but will find us "at home," which may not be quite agreeable if we think you intrude. Light your cigar with a bit of that, and send the rest home to your friends. Good morning. [*Exit.*

Grenouille. Parbleau! bot de English be de peuple var extraordinaire. [*Exit.*

[Servant *takes off pieces of broken glass. Scene changes.*

Scene.—*A Steeple-chase Course marked out with flags. The starters leading about in their clothes.* Dareall *in his hunting costume on his horse as course clearer. Mixed assemblage of people.*

Tom D. Pray, gentlemen, give the ponies room to walk about.

[*A private carriage draws up with* Sir John *and* Lady Foxhall, Precept, *and* Graceless *in it. The crowd take off hats and huzza. A* Countryman *walks up to the carriage.*

Countryman. [*Doffing his hat.*] My service to yer, Sir John; duty to your ladyship. Success to yer, Master Graceless; no fear of the coop laving Foxhall

Coort. We've all backed yer, Master Graceless. I be but a poor man; but dang it if I'd see you beat for five poon note!

[*During this speech,* GRACELESS *has doffed his great coat, and appears in jockey costume;* LADY FOXHALL *and* SIR JOHN *bowing to the respects paid them.*

GRACELESS. Here I am, Coulter—right as a trivet; and Alexander's right. We'll do our best, never fear.

COUNTRYMAN. The best can do no more, Master; very few do that.

[*Bell rings for saddling—horses are stripped, saddled, and the riders mount, and take each their canter. Bell rings for starting—horses and riders are brought up—the Starter gets them together. The flag drops—two going off before time, no start. They come back—get again in order. The flag drops. "They're off!" While running, "Blue for a sov.!" "Red for five pounds!" On nearing the post,* GRACELESS *slightly leads. Hurrahs. "Bay wins!" "Blue wins!" "Alexander wins!* GRACELESS *wins by a clear length. Returning to the weighing stand, the crowd congratulate.* GROOM *takes Alexander by the bridle.*

GROOM. By your leave, gentlemen, if you please!

[GRACELESS *dismounts, takes in his saddle, comes out.*

GRACELESS. All right. You may go home, Tim.

[GRACELESS *gets to his carriage, and dresses. The* STEWARD *brings the cup.*

STEWARD. Permit me, Lady Foxhall, to hand you the cup your son has so manfully and fairly won; and with it, the congratulations of all who have the advantage of knowing or being known to your ladyship and family.

LADY F. Sir, the cup, though an elegant trophy of

my son's success, is, I assure you, of far less value in our estimation than is the kind demonstration of the approval we have this day experienced of our friends and neighbours. [*Carriage drives off. Scene closes.*

SECOND AGE.

GRACELESS *appears as a Man.*

SCENE.—Ad libitum. *Enter* GRACELESS *on one side,* TRUMAN *on the other.*

TRUMAN. What, Foxhall! This is an unexpected pleasure! I should have thought nothing could have drawn you from England during the hunting season.

FOXHALL. Something has, as you see. The fact is, I have heard so much of Irish hunters and Irish riding, that I accepted the invitation of a cousin of mine—O'Kelly—and have been staying at his house. I return home in a few days, and the O'Kellys go with me. But what has brought you into Galway?

TRUMAN. To own the truth, a little love-affair—or rather, a serious one; for on it my happiness depends. Singularly enough, its object is Miss O'Kelly, who I was not till now aware is related to you. We met last season in London. I offered her my hand there; she did not absolutely refuse me. I can bear suspense no longer; and am come to know my fate, having only arrived last night.

FOXHALL. My cousin Kate, eh? Well, she is an excellent girl, and, I can tell you, the toast of the county; but this I can tell you also: serious as you term the affair, a serious lover won't do for Kate. They talk of

Graceless Foxhall being wild: why, he is a sober animal when compared with the lively Kate! [*A lady heard coming, singing.*] I hear her voice.

Enter KATE, *in a riding-habit.*

KATE. Mr. Truman! about the last man I should have expected to see in my wild country; but, being come, an Irish welcome to you! [*Gives her hand.*

TRUMAN. Is it not a little cruel to say I am so unexpected?

KATE. Not at all. I hope it is not a Chancery suit brings you; and I doubt the Galway Blazers having attraction enough.

TRUMAN. You are quite right—they have not; but you know here [*taking her hand*] is attraction to draw me round the world.

KATE. Mercy! such a journey would not suit me at all! Why, I should not be back by next hunting-season! But come, being here, you shall see a little hunting. My brother shall lend you a horse.

FOXHALL. And I'll also mount you, with pleasure.

TRUMAN. Many thanks; but, with my present feelings, I must decline your offers.

FOXHALL. [*Aside.*] Better not, I can tell you. Go you must, and *go well*, if you mean to have any chance with Kate.

KATE. Decline, did you say? What a slow creature you must be!

TRUMAN. Slow, as a hunting man, I grant: I do not not profess to be a horseman.

KATE. No matter—I'll lend you my mare Shelah. She can top our walls as safe as a cat. I'll ride a young one I've got. "Sit fast, and keep their heads straight—

they'll all go." And so shall you: I shall then judge how far you'll do for Galway.

FOXHALL. Well said, Cousin Kate! I really wonder you're not in love with me: I always tell you I should just suit you.

KATE. I know you do; but—[*Sings*]—"love always goes by contraries, my dear." But come—it's lunch time. You must taste our Irish claret to-day, Mr. Truman; and we'll give you a taste of the Blazers to-morrow. I suppose, Graceless, you dine at the club dinner to-day?

FOXHALL. I do. I am sorry, Truman, none but members are admitted; but I'm sure my cousin Kate and her friends will do the hospitable by you—it's a way they have in Galway.

KATE. Most willingly. Come! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*A Dinner-Table. Gentlemen in hunting costume at table.*

PRESIDENT. Come, O'Rourke! you generally have something singular by way of anecdote to tell us. Have you met anything extraordinary of late?

ALL. Come—do, Jack! let us have something; and remember, the great merit of an anecdote is being short, circumstantial, and astonishing.

O'ROURKE. Well, it ain't, perhaps, very astonishing, yet I thought it a little quare, too, and it ain't very long, so this is it: I was passing a little chibeen-house, about a month ago, when I saw a man sitting at the door, with a dudheen in his mouth, and a few friends round him. Just as I got up to him, he began to sing. "Faith!" says I to myself, "but it's an iligant voice ye have, any way!" So I stopped while he gave

them "The Low-backed Car" in prime style. Well, the applause put him in high spirits; so he called for the floor, and out they brought it. He just topped off a noggin of whiskey, and set dancing for the bare life: If anything bate his singing, it was the way he danced "The Fox-hunter's Jig." I thought he must be some remarkable man, by the way he sung, and danced, and drank: so I inquired, and who may you think they said it was?

ALL. Can't guess!

O'ROURKE. Why, the Lord Chancellor of England, just out for a spree.

ALL. Bravo, Jack! that will do!

PRESIDENT. Come, O'Rourke, who will you call on for a song?

O'ROURKE. Graceless Foxhall, for "The Foremost Flight."

FOXHALL. With pleasure. [*Sings*]

A MEMBER. Have you anything new in the horse way, Jack?

O'ROURKE. Faith I have! and an extraordinary animal he is!

MEMBER. Of course. But what is his singularity?

O'ROURKE. Just this: he can jump as wide as the world, and is at the same time so trained and quiet, he would jump over this table, just as it is now. Who's got a horse would do that?

FOXHALL. I have, and will bet fifty he does it now.

O'ROURKE. I'll take you.

FOXHALL. You shall. We'll have him in directly.

[*Rises and rings. Servant enters. He gives some directions.*

PRESIDENT. Gentlemen, having drunk "Her Majesty

the Queen'" and "The Ladies," I beg to propose what we love next best, "Fox-hunting."

[*The toast is drunk with cheers. Foxhall's horse is led in. He mounts, and rides him round the table; then puts him at it, and clears it.*

DIFFERENT PERSONS. Bravo! capital! Well rode, by George!

O'ROURKE. The horse is well trained, that's clear; but as to the riding, he'd do it just the same with anybody on him.

FOXHALL. I'll bet fifty he don't with you.

A MEMBER. Come, Jack, you can't refuse!

O'ROURKE. Devil a bit!

[*Mounts — rides at the table — smashes it in the middle.*

FOXHALL. You're unfortunate to-night, Mr. O'Rourke.

O'ROURKE. Nabocklish! better luck next time! It's fortunate we had nearly concluded our evening; for, like many of the members of the last sitting elsewhere, we have lost our seats.

PRESIDENT. Then, gentlemen, as we're not on the Opposition, out of respect to our friends, we'll resign our places.

ALL. Agreed!

SCENE.—*A Cover.* KATE O'KELLY *and* TRUMAN *mounted.* HUNTSMEN *and* WHIPS. *Voices heard cheering hounds.*

KATE. Come, Mr. Truman! this cover's a sure find; and the Blazers don't give Mr. Pug long to make his toilette, if they find him at home.

HUNTSMAN. Have at him, Hannibal, old boy!

[*"Tally-ho!" heard at a distance.* HUNTSMAN *blows his horn.* "*Whoo! whoo! Go, hark together! Hark together! Hark!*" FIRST WHIP *smacks his whip.* "*Hark forward! Hark!*"

KATE. A find, for a thousand! Come along!

[*Jumps over a fence.*

SCENE.—*A Road in England. Turnpike—the gate shut.*

Enter TRUMAN *and* KATE O'KELLY, *on horseback.*

TRUMAN. Gate!

TURNPIKEMAN. Here I am, sir!

TRUMAN. What do you keep the gate shut for? I never saw it so before.

TURNPIKEMAN. Perhaps not, sir; and I never saw you before; I am a stranger here. Toll, please—threepence the two.

KATE. It's long before an Irishman would shut a gate, or his door, against a woman.

TRUMAN. Open the gate, you vagabond! Do you think I want to evade the toll?

TURNPIKEMAN. "Vagabond," is it? Then, till you pay my toll, you'll stay where you are, unless you can jump the gate.

KATE. Capital hint! So I will!

TRUMAN. Dear Kate, don't be so rash as to attempt it! Remember your cousin's fall last week, in Ireland.

KATE. No matter; it's nothing when you're used to it! [*To* TURNPIKEMAN.] Will you open the gate?

TURNPIKEMAN. I will, when I've got the toll.

KATE. Then here goes, for the honour of Ireland!

[*Clears it.*

TRUMAN. Here, you scoundrel, take your money!

TURNPIKEMAN. Here's a carriage coming. I'll take both tolls together.

[FOXHALL *drives up in a phaeton.*]

FOXHALL. Hallo, Truman! Why, I thought you and Kate were riding together.

TRUMAN. We were: but this impudent fellow refused to open the gate till we paid the toll; so your cousin put her horse at it, and has gone over, as she said, "for the honour of Ireland."

FOXHALL. And has left you pounded, eh? Ah, Truman, she'll tell you you'll never do for Galway! [*To the man.*] Come, open the gate, you sir!

TURNPIKEMAN. Pay the toll first.

FOXHALL. Oh, is that it? Then, coz, I'll follow your example. Here goes, for the honour of England.

[*Turns his phaeton, comes at it in a canter, and smashes it.* TRUMAN *follows. Scene closes.*

Scene.—A Ball Room. Servants putting chairs, &c. in order.

1ST SERVANT. Well, I believe it's all right now. I suppose some of the company will be arriving directly.

2ND SERVANT. I suppose so. But this is the hunt ball, and used always to take place a week before this: how came it to be put off?

1ST SERVANT. Don't you know? Then I'll tell you. It's done in compliment to Miss O'Kelly, who is to be married to Mr. Truman; so it was put off till all was quite settled.

[*A loud knock. Company arrives, and dancing commences.*

FOXHALL. [*Addressing Lady Foxhall.*] My dear Madam, I have a little surprise for you. A few friends of mine have unexpectedly arrived in the neighbourhood: I have taken the liberty of inviting them. They are first-rate dancers, I assure you, though their style may be a little peculiar.

LADY F. I am sure, Graceless, any friends of yours will be cordially welcome.

SERVANT *enters; speaks to* FOXHALL.

FOXHALL. I hear my friends are arrived. I will give them a welcome, and then introduce them.

[*He does so, introducing eight gentlemen and ladies, on horseback, who dance a quadrille, and then exeunt. A dance follows.*

SIR JOHN F. Ladies and gentlemen, supper awaits us.

KATE *comes forward.*

KATE. Ladies and gentlemen, the plot of our play seems, that I am shortly to become one of a pair that are always denominated happy. Many young hearts have fluttered, and others will flutter, on such occasions; so might mine, had I not a counterpoise here, where, so long as the freaks of us foxhunters have power to amuse, I shall, with your permission, though I may change the name, still retain the character of Kate O'Kelly.

THE RING.

I THINK it more than probable that, if anything I might write should be of consequence enough to attract general public attention, the title of this article would draw down on my devoted head anathemas, if not loud, at least deep, for daring, in this refined—"God save the mark!" for I had almost said comparatively effeminate—age, to introduce a subject, whereon to say anything of a laudatory import would bring on the conclusion that I am an uncouth savage, wishing to see this our smiling land in a state of (to say the least) semi-barbarism.

Now whether I am uncouth or not, matters nothing to any one; and whether I am a savage or not, only to those intimately connected with me: and if I write, which I always attempt to do, that which is somewhat near the truth, there are those who are liberal enough, without professing or having any regard to the man, to award to the writer the humble merit of straightforward intention. It is, in fact, to this intention that, I am quite aware, I owe the favour of the public and the favourable consideration of the Press. I have written the term "effeminate:" I will not expunge it, nor need I apologise for having used it, for I mean it not offensively. Still, it requires explanation.

There is an old Latin proverb, which I learned as a boy, that, if my memory serves, runs, "Nemo repente

fit turpissimus." That, I suppose, means, "became *one* of the most base;" for I do not believe the absolutely most base, most virtuous, most courageous, or most cowardly of all beings, was ever carried out in the person of any one individual. All things and all men are what they are comparatively with others; so a man may be even courageous and hardy, and yet effeminate to a certain degree in the estimation of one more courageous and more hardy.

To show that what is effeminate or luxurious is only comparatively so, I must call to my aid a little occurrence that I once saw and heard, between two of the tribe of those who convey coals from Dunkerton to Bath, by carts, horses, and asses. It was father and daughter: they were returning from Bath, having sold their cargoes. The young lady, prior to mounting her donkey, placed an additional black coal-sack or two on its back, to prevent an undue pressure of his back-bone against a certain fair (for, being covered, it might be fair) proportion of her person. "Dang it, Bess!" says the father, "cant'st thee ride without making a lady of thy"—"seat," he would have said, if he had been a decent fellow. He used a more expletive term; but it shows everything is comparative, from the royal purple cushion to the coal-sack.

I hope I have made the *amende honorable* sufficiently strong, for using the term "effeminate," to be now on good terms with my reader; for if he is one of quite modern date, I shall require all his forbearance for what I may say in the present article.

There now live thousands of young men who softly lisp to their companions their self-styled refinement of ideas over those who were youths ere the present race were thought of; and among the refinements they so

pique themselves upon, no doubt bring forward their non-patronage of the Ring as a leading proof. Let them enjoy their opinions; let them circulate among themselves: but if they have as much sense as ideal refinement, they will limit the circulation to the clique from which they emanate.

I may be termed arrogant by such clique, for setting at nought their opinions; for, verily, in countless array such clique shows itself now-a-days. But I can refute the charge of any such arrogance, should it be made, in one moment. I do not set up my opinion against that of thousands, though those thousands are all of one genus; for if I regret to see (or fancy I see) opinions and habits that well become women spreading among our growing youth, and if I think any change from manly pursuits towards more effeminate ones a circumstance to be deplored, I beg to call to the notice of any dainty and delicate gentleman who differs from me a few names that will somewhat astonish him, as patronising pursuits I humbly advocate under such authority.

I venture the surmise that any young gentleman who would hold it rather objectionable to be seen speaking to Mr. Gulley, but would, on the other hand, consider it quite *en règle* to even shake hands with "The Jullien," will allow that the following names bode that their possessors knew something of refined ideas and gentlemanly habits, though differing in everything from such a young gentleman as I have supposed:—

His late Majesty George the Fourth, both as Regent and Monarch; his royal brothers, the Dukes of York and Clarence; the Dukes of Queensbury and Hamilton; the Earls of Sefton and Albemarle; Marquises of Worcester and Tweeddale; Lords Lowther, Barrymore, Fife, Craven; the prince of poetry, Lord Byron; and a

score of others, whose names I cannot at this moment recall to memory, have all (and many of these on principle, as encouraging a manly feeling and bearing among men) patronised the Prize Ring.

For those, therefore, of minor minds, minor position in society, and minor in those attributes that best "become a man," to attempt to decry what such noble names have upheld, is absurd as it is presumptuous.

Had such men as I have particularised lived in feudal times, when man was rude in mind and manners, it might be fairly alleged that time and refinement had not only changed, but improved, the tone of society; but a more refined court than that of George the Fourth had never existed, nor a more finished gentleman ever trod the earth than was that monarch; and it was in his days when the palmy ones of the Ring were in their fullest career.

Descending from nobility, I could mention scores of names of those of noble families who were men that hackney-coachmen, or any of the *habitués* of such grade knew too well to offer impertinence to. They would not anticipate a summons to meet the magistrate in Bow or Marlborough Street, but a summons on the spot to meet their mother earth, and such summonses repeated much quicker than any clerk could write it. Such men as Captains Barton, Barclay, Berkeley, Mellish, &c., would not subject themselves to the heated and offensive atmosphere of a police office, would not avail themselves of the politeness of a sitting magistrate, or be exposed to the common impertinence of the subordinates of the office. Happy it was for the latter they did not. I have, as a very young one myself, seen such men, had the gloves on twice with the second mentioned, but took especial care not to try it a third time.

With the last I was as intimate as a boy of eighteen could be with a man perhaps twenty years his senior, and have been knocked about by him, to make me (as he termed it) "hold up my head," till I scarcely knew whether that head was or was not on my shoulders. I have lived with such men as these: may I not, therefore, hope to be pardoned if I cannot cotton to feelings, habits, and ideas, the very antitheses to those of men whom to know was to admire.

In part of a most liberal review of a work of mine, the critic says, "The writer generally bears hardly upon the present generation and their recreations, and compares the athletic country gentleman of threescore years ago, who entered with zest into the sports of the field, with the railroad and omnibus young men of the present day."

Can I feel—can I honestly write—otherwise? I point to no one individual, so no one has reason to take offence. I write for no class, nor would I. I venture my general and undisguised ideas, please or displease whom they may; and have written too long, I fear, to correct old habits and errors:

> "I have not quailed to danger's brow
> When high and happy: need I *now?*"

I feel I should quite lose caste among such men as I have described, if I did; and I hold the suffrages of such

> "Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear."

The critic I have alluded to says I bear hardly on the "railroad and omnibus young men of the present day." God knows, it is far from my wish to bear hard on any one, whose circumstances, like my own, compel them to avail themselves of a threepenny jumble-together in an omnibus. I only mean, I pity those who, in this

railroad and omnibus age, have lost the former pleasures of the road, and have never been conversant with the mode of travelling the road rendered necessary. Any girl can travel a couple of hundred miles in a first class carriage on the rail; but it required something of the hardihood of a man to face the same distance, in January, outside the mail. No doubt the first, for a long distance, is the most preferable mode of transit; but if, by using it on all occasions, a man renders his frame so soft that he could not endure the latter, it goes far towards producing that comparative effeminacy I have mentioned: and if riding to the Bank for threepence induces a man to do so every day, when the having to pay two-and-sixpence for a jarvey caused him to walk it perhaps five days in six, we must not be surprised if we hear a great hulking fellow of fourteen stone declare himself like our facetious French friend in the farce, "*joliment fatigue*," though he had only walked a couple of miles. Provided a man could ensure his never having occasion to exert his bodily powers in any way, it would not matter if he did render himself incapable of any exertion; but what a precious nation it would be where man had so become!

I have mixed with men with noble names, who could take hold of an awkward team, and, with a heavy load behind, could bring them in over a heavy stage in the accustomed time. These were men who, though enjoying every luxury and elegance at home, held an additional wisp of straw under their feet, and a borrowed horsecloth over their knees, a sufficient protection against an unusually inclement day. The presence of such men "down the road" was a circumstance of congratulation to landlords, waiters, ostlers, boots, coachmen, guards, and horsekeepers. All hailed him, all wished him well,

the coachman got his sovereign for my lord's drive, and my lord got health and appetite from the same cause. My lord now ensconces himself in a railway carriage; and few, if any, know whether he is a nobleman of England or a sheriff of London.

I have heard it said that "the greatest of pleasures is a cessation of pain." Upon some such principle I should certainly praise the rail that had set me down at the end of one hundred miles in four hours: not that there is any pain in such travelling; on the contrary, a great deal of bodily indulgence—a thing, by-the-bye, that carries very little recommendation with it to me. I positively bless a railroad for its velocity, just as a man would bless anything that had accelerated his emancipation from prison, of which a railroad carriage is a symbol, as being a place from which you can see little, sometimes nothing, of the outward world. The inside of a coach was, if anything, worse; but give me a place outside. I can, or rather could, find something to interest me every minute: many a man could not—for him the rail is a blessing! but for one like me, who, in technical phrase, generally "worked" most of the distance I went by coaches, my interest was always kept up, and nothing pleased me better than to hear "You'll have four rather rummish customers next stage, sir." This was where some change had taken place since I had waggoned the same coach before.

Be it as it may, railroads have come in, and coaches gone off. I can still, however, point out one very nicely appointed one that leaves London — the West Malling. I hope it pays; if so, long may it continue to do so.

I will not say what any sight may be to other persons; but if there is one more disgusting to me than

another, it is to see an imperialed, moustached, representative of a man riding in elegant listlessness in a low pony carriage in assumed languor, as if he was

> "Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with perfume,
> Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul in her bloom."

Could one be surprised if a servant of that fine old veteran whip, the late Sir Henry Peyton, was, in passing this bit of effeminacy, to lean over his seat, and in slang whisper inquire, "Who suckles the young'uns while *you're* out?" I think we may presume such gentleman would pronounce the Ring as "horrid," "barbarous," &c.

The only general sort of carriage of a manly character that we have left is the mail phaeton. How different to the reclining, half-foreign looking piece of inanity, looks that gentleman with the bay and brown in his driving phaeton, matching to a hair's breadth in action, and that of the best sort! He is not far from sixty; but, though most gentlemanly, indeed courteous in speech and address, is one of the hard-bitten sort; could use the gloves well, and his hands in or out of them. I should like to see the Recliner drive his "Beautiful ponies, with flowing manes and tails," against the pair of steppers. Unless Moustache is better than he looks to be, I will answer for it the other, though with the penalty of twenty-five years against him, would give him, in coaching phrase, a "waking up." Our specimen of a man and a gentleman wears no inch-wide piece of satin round his neck, with two bows east and west, like two of the sweeps of a miniature windmill. A plain summer cambric coloured cravat, the shirt collar just showing, is all he wears. No massive Albert gold chain hangs in a festoon across his waistcoat, which, rest assured, would not in the morning be a satin one

his hands, though showing in colour as those of a gentleman, *can endure* the feel of a critically cleaned leather glove when riding or driving, and let the kids wait their evening turn.

It may be said George the Fourth drove ponies and a low phaeton. He did; so may any man without subjecting himself to even suspicion of effeminacy, if infirm, and twenty stone; but when he was H.R.H. only, he could handle four horses as well as most men, and patronize others who did.

Pony carriages are a very pretty little *cortége* for a lady anywhere, for a Prince in his own park taking an airing with his family; but if Pickford and Co.'s, or Chaplin and Horne's men smashed all they met, driven by young hale men, were I a magistrate I would stretch the law a bit to let the man off who did so.

Can we point out no other manly yet elegant carriage in our streets driven by its owner? Yes: there is that green curricle of the ever-remembered shape, yet fashionable-looking too. It runs, as coachmen used to say, "like oil." The dark browns drawing it are no weedy worthless bits of cast-off thorough-breds, but looking like two compact hunters for a thickly-enclosed country —their greatest failing for such purpose being their high and splendid road action. Who drives them? One who ever looks the nobleman, the soldier, and the gentleman, in whatever situation he is seen. Does he never drive a low pony phaeton? In certain cases, probably he does; but recollect that thirty-five years since he drove our enemies at a pace they had been little accustomed to. Such men may do as they like anywhere. Since this was written, alas, he is no more!

"Fitzroy Stanhope drives a phaeton with only one horse." He does; and if you will give him three more

he would drive them ; but he does not use a muddy, or flowing manes and tails, though his access to his carriage is attended with some difficulty : nor does he play sick lady in his mode of sitting in it.

But what has driving to do with the Ring? inquires some critic. Nothing at all, I admit, replies the writer ; yet the Ring had something to do with driving, and a great deal to do with the general habits, predilections, opinions, and consequently bearing, of men in this way.

It matters not where or what may be the country, wherever manly and athletic pursuits are encouraged, more or less manly and athletic will be the denizens of that country. Wherever such pursuits are not patronized, it will have a direct opposite effect on the minds and habits of its people. But—say those opposed to manly pursuits—we do not want to be a nation of prize-fighters, huntsmen, and coachmen. No doubt we do not ; but we wish to remain a nation that can fight when the prize is worth contending for. "Yet," retorts some one disposed to pay attention, and afford patronage only to what may improve us as artisans and artistes, and would leave our manly attributes to take their chance, or be totally lost from want of encouragement, "nations who neither box, hunt, drive, row, or play cricket, are as brave as we are." I will not merely not attempt to dispute such hypothesis, but will admit it as an axiom that it is so. Gallant, brave, and capital soldiers such nations are—nay, perhaps, in the spirit of martinetism (if I may use such expression) of military habit, some may even surpass us. Yet there is a something in us that, with any fair odds against us, has always brought us through with the best of it. Gallantry is no doubt a splendid attribute : many of our neighbours have it in perfection : it is a star that shines resplendently in its

peculiar hemisphere. Firm and resolute determination has little show in it, but a certain feeling so well expressed by our Scottish bard—

> "Come one, come all, this rock shall fly
> From its firm base as soon as I,"

is the true feeling of a soldier. Military pride and gaining victory as a *soldier* have done much for foreign troops: the dogged determination not to be beaten as a *man*, has done more for English ones. The parade, a field day, or a review is the delight of a French soldier. An English one would never put on his red coat if he could avoid it, unless when called on to make his enemy respect it. If the perfection of art and swordmanship could save a man, the French Cuirassiers would, to a man, have been invincible; but the swinging arm and stout heart of Shaw, the boxer, found out the vulnerable place in many of them. Of course, he knew his single sword could do nothing towards turning the fortune of the day; nor possibly did he think about the glory of his country. But he would, for his own pride's sake, yield to no man: he feared no man, had succumbed to no one, or would do so while life remained in him. He began his fighting career with long odds against him when a youth, at his native place in Nottinghamshire: he came off victorious there. With longer odds against him, he was victorious at Waterloo, while sword to sword he mowed down in succession each opponent. Alas! that a bullet should ever have reached such a man.

I have, however, not yet stated in what way the Ring and driving had any influence on each other. Simply in this way. Whoever patronised the Ring, did so from admiration of that which is manly and courageous. Driving four-in-hand was a manly pursuit: many patrons of the Ring did so. But they would have blushed to be

seen driving a pair of ponies; they would, in short, have blushed to have been seen doing anything unmanly. They hunted, and when they did, no more shrunk from an ox fence than from the fist or sword of man: they prided themselves on exhibiting in all things manliness of character.

There was a time when the ordinary Englishman ridiculed and abused everything foreign, and more particularly French. Nothing could be more illiberal, ill-bred, or more evincing a low mind and utter ignorance. This was never, of course, manifested by the well informed; but it is possible the latter may soon fall into extreme the other way, and fashion, which bears "sovereign sway," may induce so fostering a notice of foreigners as to produce a very prejudicial effect on our ideas and manners; for it requires close observance and very acute discrimination to adopt only the meritorious attributes and habits of other nations, and to reject that which may be of an objectionable character; and if there is an objectionable characteristic of our continental neighbours, it is a want of that manly bearing in their general habits that has hitherto distinguished Englishmen.

There are few men more refractory to those above them than the English. They frequently manifest this to a most objectionable degree, and, in sooth, in a most objectionable manner; but this, considerable as it is, when carried too far, requires to be checked with caution; for if we do away with the independent feeling of an Englishman, we destroy him. I forget in what work I have read it; but, alluding to the characteristics of a Frenchman, it says, "And bid him go to h—ll, to h—ll he goes." Now, bid an Englishman do the same thing, his reply would be about this: "I'll see you in h—ll

first." Not polite, but to the point, and English. We will suppose a French nobleman so far forgot himself as to strike a man of the lower order, I conceive there are three ways in which it would be treated: perfect submission; much blustering, so far as words went; or it might be a fatal stab.

I believe there is but one way such an act would be treated by an Englishman. He would not bear it submissively, he would not say much on the subject, but would give, or try to give, "My Lord" a sound thrashing on the spot: about the last thing a Frenchman would think of.

If, however, the English are prone to an independency of feeling towards those above them, no nation is more, or perhaps so much, led by the examples set by rank and fashion; and if foreigners of noble birth are, in compliance with example, the cherished guests of many of our nobility, the contagion will here assuredly spread; and Mrs. So-and-So will invite Chevalier "Autel" and his friends, though no one could *tell* from whence or from whom any of them sprung.

Our neighbours are really showing far more sense than ourselves, as regards introducing to their own country from us all that they think likely to tend to eradicate anything they conceived objectionable in their own habits, and are learning anything they consider commendable or beneficial among us. We are learning to imitate Bohemian glass, French tapestry, and porcelain. The Emperor is introducing to his subjects' notice far different things. He is manly in his own habits and pursuits, and, no doubt, considers somewhat more of manliness of character would be beneficial to his countrymen. He is introducing and patronising hunting, racing, steeple-chasing, and encouraging all sorts of field

sports: for this he is purchasing, or encouraging the purchase of, our best horses and mares. Will this encouragement of English field sports in another country, and our rising generation being taught to disregard them, lead to France becoming figuratively England, and England a foreign nation as regards the pursuits of its inhabitants. Even that, with everything and everybody foreign being encouraged, may come to pass. Who knows but some one may yet see even the Ring, the last thing that it could be supposed a Frenchman would encourage, pitched at Marli? Well, they are a fine, gallant set of fellows, and do not want the requisite courage. So, should this ever occur, though I shall never see it, perhaps my spirit may hover there, to give them the true old English toast: "A clear stage and no favour."

PIGEON SHOOTING.

The legitimate shot—for by such term I have designated the sportsman who makes pheasant, grouse, partridge, snipe, and woodcocks his quarry—will perhaps be as prone to anathematize pigeon shooting, as will be the man who never in his life put a gun to his shoulder: their reprehension of the pursuit would, however, arise from different causes. The first would only object to it on the plea that it does not come into the category of the pursuits of the regular sportsman. In this he is perfectly right; for many a man is a first-rate pigeon shooter whose peregrinations or love of sport never carried him beyond the hearing of Bow bells, or at all events of those of some suburban church. The other would hold it objectionable on the score of cruelty, or, as he might term it, wholesale slaughter.

The regular field shot condemns pigeon shooting solely because he holds the pursuit as offering no incentive to make amends for sacrificing the life of the bird destroyed, and considers it a practice in itself beneath and unworthy of the attention of a sportsman. The man of no sporting propensities condemns it on the score of cruelty. Both are influenced by prejudice. Sport, in the true spirit of the term, is amusement. It is only habit that brings to our mind's eye the sportsman when the term "sport" is used; and looking at the two characters merely as men,

there is nothing more commendable in the partridge shooter than the shot who confines his pursuit to pigeons. The only fair reason we can give for holding one pursuit in higher estimation than the other, is, that while field shooting is the pursuit of gentlemen, and those they employ, the other is in very common practice with many low characters; and, further, the first leads to no low associations, while the other is very apt to do so—two very good reasons, we must admit, for a man preferring the one to the other.

We will now look to the accusation of pigeon shooting being cruel. There can be no doubt but that to a certain extent, deny it as we may, or try to evade the accusation as we will, there is a degree of cruelty in all field sports. So there is in killing a lamb; but we are not told that to avoid this it is our duty to live on roots or other vegetables. We are told, or might be told, we kill the lamb for food; yet we could live and be in health on grain, fruit, and vegetables. The fact is, our palates like the taste of lamb, and we sacrifice the growing mutton to indulge our taste. So in honest truth we pursue sport and game to indulge a taste of a different kind. In both instances we indulge our inclinations by perpetrating that which the very fastidious may consider more or less cruel; and I fear it is an incontrovertible truth, that where man does not indulge his inclination at the expense of some cruelty or suffering to his fellow-man, it most commonly arises from his wanting the opportunity of (without injury to himself) doing so. There are, no doubt, bright examples to be found of men who would not; such men are, like miracles, to be wondered at. But, after all, I doubt if they would not kill the lamb, and eat him too: so such luminaries are only a little more perfect than us, their humble satellites.

Nor would the lamb hold them one atom less merciful than the fox, hare, partridge, or pigeon holds us.

Whenever we hear any man decrying pigeon shooting on the score of its cruelty, we may fairly set him down as one who gives his opinion on a subject with which he is unacquainted. I really consider it even less cruel than any other bird shooting, for two reasons. There are no dogs subjected to the frequent brutality of keepers, necessary; the breaking of whom, I consider, constitutes the only reprehensible feature in shooting, for great cruelty very frequently is inflicted ere the dog becomes perfect in his business. Now for the birds. Every fair shot singles out his bird from the covey, and, as far as he can, avoids injuring any but the doomed one.

But stray shots will, and do very commonly, reach some of the others, not hitting hard enough to kill, but enough to cause much suffering, and possibly subsequent death to the wounded bird. Now in pigeon shooting the bird often falls dead within a few paces of the trap, or, should he not, some other gun brings him down; and I think I may venture to say that not two pigeons in a hundred get off, to die, as it is supposed, a lingering death.

Thousands of sportsmen never saw trap pigeon shooting in their lives; some from the want of opportunity or leisure, others from want of inclination: so we may fairly infer that hundreds of thousands of other persons know no more about it than I do of launching a man-of-war from the dock wherein she was made. For their instruction I will explain the usual routine of trap shooting; and a great trap it is frequently made for the unwary, for very heavy betting often goes on, on such events. Old hands are very shy of betting on any man's gun, when and where his shooting is not well known; for he may mask his shooting as the scamp at billiards may his play,

and many a young hand has, unlike the pigeons, been hit uncommonly hard, though his life is quite safe.

There is a particular breed of pigeons usually provided for trap shooting, indeed always so when any match of sweepstakes of any consequence is to come off. These are the blue-rocks, the wildest and most rapid of all pigeons in their flight on going off. The moment the trap falls, they are off with the rapidity of thought. It does now and then happen that on the fall of the trap the bird will, from confusion, stand for a moment still; but when he does go, it is, figuratively, as quick as a flash of gunpowder, and, unless brought down, he would be fifty paces from the trap ere some other breeds of pigeons would get fairly on wing.

Pigeon matches, like most sporting events, take place in a variety of places, and between and among men in various different positions in society. There are clubs of pigeon shots, these, of course, also varying as to the grades of persons composing them; and matches frequently are made between a certain number of the members of such clubs to shoot against each other, the side killing the greatest number of birds out of the number agreed on to be shot at, of course winning. But it frequently, indeed generally, happens, that where each man shoots at a given number of birds, some of the guns kill the same number of birds: these parties, therefore, shoot again at a given number. This is called, "shooting off the ties." But even in doing this, supposing four have shot who had tied in the match, three of these may again have the same number; so those three must have a third trial, till one has proved his superiority. Where matches are between clubs, the ground is usually kept private for the use of the shooters and their friends. The most celebrated places for pigeon-match shooting have

been for many years Chalk Farm and the Red House: there, are, however, many of minor grade. Hornsey Wood has risen much in public estimation; but never having been there, I know nothing of the ground or company.

That the legitimate sportsman may not cast a contumelious thought or look on the pigeon shooter, let me remind him that, in my very limited knowledge of the crack shots of this day, I can specify names well known in the hunting-field from October to April; and on the moor, heath, hill, and stubble in August and September. Those who have so often seen Mr. Osbaldeston at the covert side, and seen him cheer his all-but-matchless pack over the broad pastures of Leicestershire, might also have seen him contending at the Red House for the palm of victory with the first pigeon-shots of his day. The shooting of Captain Ross has been, if anything, more extraordinary than the way in which he could pilot Clinker over any country. Lord Kennedy and Colonel Anson were equally at home in all sporting pursuits, and in pigeon shooting even no less celebrated. Mr. Shoubridge has met Captain Ross in trials of superiority in match, and without being in any way competent to award supremacy to the one or the other gentleman, I do know on one occasion the gallant Captain was obliged to succumb after a contest perhaps unrivalled in performance as regards their joint merits. Even I could mention dozens of other names as sportsmen and pigeon shots; but those I have brought forward are in themselves a host.

To enter a little closer into the *modus operandi* in pigeon matches, the birds are provided by persons who well know the sort to select; indeed it is usual to mention in the terms of a match—"The birds to be supplied

by——" (Barker is perhaps the most celebrated name in late years as a supplier of pigeons). They are paid for at a moderate price by the person shooting at them. They then, if killed, are the property of the shooter; but as a practice, are never claimed. They are brought carefully in wicker baskets, high enough to allow the birds full space to stand upright. The pigeon traps vary a little in construction; but are all small wooden boxes of about twelve inches from front to back, but something less in width, and are so contrived that in pulling a string attached to them the fabric falls somewhat like cards set up, and the bird becomes exposed standing on the bottom of the trap, which is effected by hinges that let the encloses fall by one impediment being removed by a pull at the string. There is a straight cross-line mark, beyond which none of the shooters, who are to shoot on equal terms, are to put their toe. The traps, unless by special agreement to the contrary, are placed one-and-twenty yards from the cross line; and supposing six shooters are to contend, a box is placed for each at a convenient distance from each other. The shooters then take their stand in a row behind the cross line. Sometimes by mutual agreement, at other times by toss, it is decreed which of the competitors is to begin. They then fire in succession. Each shot is at liberty to hold his gun as he thinks proper; but he must not put it actually to his shoulder till the bird takes wing.

Betting on pigeon shooting is carried on in so many forms, it would be impossible to enumerate them; but they, with modifications, are usually thus:—Supposing two clubs meet, one betting is on the general united efforts of the opposing clubs. These are made at evens, or on giving or taking some odds in favour of the one club against the other, as any supposed or known supe-

riority may exist. Then comes the betting on different members of the same club, or of the opposing, one against another individually, or two against another given two, as the case may be. There is rarely any heavy betting at such matches, excepting on known crack shots; for it is only on such that any fair calculation can be made as to what their performance may be. Independent of the betting on the shooters one against the other, bets are made on the gun against the field, or, in other and more explicit terms, on the man against the bird, or *vice versâ*. The first is termed backing the gun; and the shooters must be muffs indeed where the odds are not laid on the gun. Such odds vary, of course, in accordance with the known qualifications of the shooter. With fair shots the odds are perhaps four to one on the gun; but with such as I have mentioned they would rise to six, seven, or eight to one. I make no doubt but that Captain Ross or Mr. Shoubridge would have backed their gun at eight to one as long as you pleased to bet with them; which, even on such terms, I consider would not have been for many days.

The laws of pigeon shooting are, that the bird must fall within a hundred yards of the trap, or he counts as missed. I have often seen, where the shooters were second-rate ones, birds fall at long distances, sometimes beyond the limited space allowed; but I have not often seen this occur with crack shots: they miss, or, figuratively speaking, kill dead. I have seen a bird missed; but, in a double shot, the second brought him down like a stone. It would seem as if, when such men miss, it arises from some circumstance that has prevented them from at that time taking their accustomed aim; so the bird totally escapes. The less-skilled shot usually takes an indifferent aim; so he only wounds. I consider, from

what I have seen, that it is quite possible that out of twenty pigeons fewer would escape, without getting a stray shot in them somewhere, than if shot at by the crack shot. But I conceive it would amount to this; the latter would kill eighteen out of twenty dead, the other two would escape perhaps unharmed; with the inferior one, two would escape untouched, a dozen would be more or less wounded, and only six would be killed within bounds. Of course with still worse shots more would escape unharmed, and fewer killed. I may take a wrong view of the thing, and perhaps do; but it has struck me that first-rate shots seldom take uncertain aim.

There are some features in pigeon-match shooting that certainly place the practice of it in a reprehensible point of view. Those who are enthusiastic in it are frequently led into a taste for betting, that other pursuits of the gun offer no inducement to; and an admiration of superiority often leads the young pigeon shooter into associations quite at variance with the society a gentleman is expected to mix with; for all pigeon matches do not take place at Chalk Farm, Lord's Ground, the Red House, or Hornsey Wood. There are scores of low localities where landlords give prizes, from a piece of plate to a fat pig, to be shot for. Here those who contend pay an entrance fee, that goes far in reimbursing Boniface for his seeming liberality; and the money expended in drink by the participators in the sport, their friends, other admirers of the sport, and many who go there merely because it is a gathering of pleasure seekers, make the day a real harvest to the house. A dinner follows the shooting: this is not, of course, one of the same expense or pretensions in all places, but the price charged is sure to be as high in proportion to the entertainment at the Dog and Porridge Pot as at the Castle at Richmond, Toy at Hampton

Court, or the Clarendon in London: this is mostly followed by a little card playing. So what with the expense of pigeons, presents to the trapman, loss of bets in the shooters, expenses of dinners, drink, and no trifle lost at whist, the young tyro will probably find next morning he has a somewhat heavy head, and for its counterpoise a very light purse.

If a man is fond of pigeon shooting, let him get into a club where gentlemen only are assembled: he will find it very little more expensive than low meetings for the same purpose; the dinner may be a few shillings higher, wine is drunk in lieu of spirits—a sovereign will settle this. He will find he will not have much change out of that at the Pig and Whistle, by the time he has paid for himself and probably a voluntary "go's" round to those who wait the fitting time to make any sovereigns he may have brought with him also "go's" all round to the gentry with whom he plays and bets at cards, or probably at some game more expeditious in "circulating the medium." I make these remarks that the very young and inexperienced may be a little *au fait* of what to guard against, should their taste induce them to become pigeon-match shooters. Let them get into the right channel, and such taste is no more to be reprobated than is the inclination towards any other sporting propensity. Carried on among gentlemen, it is gentlemanly; carried on in company with the low, it is low; and I believe we may say pretty much the same of most of the amusements of life.

And now one word to the field sportsman who calls pigeon shooting slaughter. No one can object to the term, for slaughter such sport is; it is only the reprobatory spirit in which the term is used that is objectionable, prejudiced, and indeed, coming from a sportsman, all but absurd. We will say a man slaughters a score or

even two score of birds. He has only to ask the field-shooter, would you object to kill ten brace of partridges in a morning's shooting? or, should game be so abundant that you had no fear of diminishing expected sport the next year, if you could show forty head of game of different sorts, would you object to your day's handiwork being chronicled in a public journal? for such things do occasionally meet the eye.

Having now attempted to explain the mode, usual routine, possible consequences, and the very different class of society to which pigeon shooting might introduce us —and having done so, I hope, fairly, and without prejudice—let us discuss a little, so far as my limited knowledge of general shooting may enable me to do, the comparative skill of the trap, or general field shooter.

As every man who sits and manages his horse to perfection in his peculiar line of horsemanship is entitled to the character of a perfect horseman, so every man who excels in any particular description of shooting may lay claim to the title of a crack shot; but it no more follows that he is a first-rate general shot, than being an accomplished jockey or perfect hussar makes a man a good general horseman. I must, however, consider that there is a wide distinction between the proficiency of the shot and that of the horseman. I do not mention this with any invidious view, but as a distinctive feature in the two attainments. We may, under very extensive construction, apply the term "knack" to shooting—with pigeon, swallow, and snipe shooters it is pre-eminently so—but we should never say a man had a knack of being a jockey or a good hunting-rider across country. Yet we might very appropriately say —— (some named jockey) has a peculiar "knack," in a set-to, of landing his horse first in the last half-dozen strides of a race. So some men

have a peculiar knack of getting through a cover; others, of getting over difficult and dangerous ground; others, again, of getting through or over not large, but blind and intricate fences. Such peculiar knack exists even in horses, in some to an extraordinary degree, without their being on the whole by any means first-rate hunters.

Swallow shooting is quite a knack, and one not difficult of attainment. The only two advantages it presents to the man wishing to become a good shot at game I conceive to be these: it certainly teaches him to shoot flying; but, far beyond this, he may easily teach himself that great attribute in a shot—coolness; to which may be added patience. Swallows, as we all know, frequent *habitate* in different localities; these during the season they will not quit: so the swallow-shot is sure to find his game, and that not in single birds. Once on the wing, the swallow flies in large or more circumscribed circles; so the young shot, should he find the bird in passing in his first circle does not present himself in such position as to afford a fair mark, has only to wait till he comes round again, or another bird appears in the position that renders the hitting him not difficult. This teaches the tyro not to think it necessary or prudent, as he otherwise might do, to let fly the moment he catches sight of his game, by doing which, unless proficient in the ever-uncertain qualification of snap-shooting, he would frequently, perhaps mostly, fire at a moment when it was next to impossible to kill, or even hit. The swallow has a peculiar habit, when turning, of presenting his whole body and wings as a large surface, and that for a momentary space of time all but motionless. The shot awaits this: so with his gun to his shoulder, and the muzzle following the bird, if he avails himself of the proper moment, he has an easy mark. If, however, he

intends swallow shooting to be the introduction to general field-shooting, when he has attained the "knack" of catching the bird on the turn, he should practise a more legitimate, though more difficult, way of bringing him down; this is by firing when he finds him for a brief space of time (and brief it will be) flying straight across his gun; for to hit him crossing is next to impossible to any common shot. Firing at the swallow coming or going brings the shooter well into the practice of shooting at game, and is another practical lesson on temper and patience, for he may see the bird a hundred times ere he finds him come or go straight for ten consecutive yards. All this, however, practises the eye of the young shooter on moving objects; teaches him to bring his gun quickly and firmly to his shoulder, and its muzzle to bear on its object—two of the most important desiderata in shooting.

Pigeon shooting soon convinces a man that, unless he gains the habit of perfectly covering his bird by his gun, and that quickly, he has little chance as a pigeon shot, for these birds will carry off such a quantity of shot that, unless very hardly hit, they are not to be stopped; and practising in achieving this is, I consider, the great cause of first-rate shots killing as dead as they do, and occasions them to kill with as much certainty as they do when practised at game of any sort.

As regards the difficulty of partridge shooting compared with that of pigeon shooting, I should say the advantage is greatly in favour of the trap-shooter, were it not that the quickness of getting on wing and the velocity of the pigeon's flight constituted a great difficulty in hitting him, and hitting him hard. The trap-shooter is aware to an inch or two from where his object will rise; he is equally aware when, in the generality of cases, it will do so; for, till he gives the word "Pull,"

his game is at his command as to when it will commence its flight. The eye of the shooter is steadily fixed on the very spot from whence he is certain the bird will rise; it as intently is fixed on its rise. And we all know that there is an unaccountable sympathy between the eye and the motion of the arms, that, without looking at them or the gun, the arms, as if by involuntary impulse on our part, divert the gun point-blank to the object on which the eye is immoveably rivetted. That which we anticipate and expect, or, indeed, know will occur, does not take us by surprise, consequently shortly ceases to cause any trepidation should the pigeon hesitate a moment or so ere he rises. Though this may cause a little embarrassment to the young shot, still the eye that has rested some time on the trap now as intently rests on the pigeon exposed to view by the falling of the trap; so the eye never quits him for an instant until he falls or has escaped.

None of these advantages attend the partridge, or grouse, or cover shooter. It is true, we may have dogs on whom perfect reliance may be placed; still he, or they, only show that game is near. So that the field-shot is about in the position or predicament the pigeon shooter would be, if told that in a garden a hundred yards square the bird he was to shoot at was somewhere within the walls; thus, if the pigeon rose to his right or left, or before him, he would find it very different to having the trap to point out the precise spot. Our dog makes a steady point, directs his nose towards a particular point to which we naturally direct our attention; yet, from some not-to-be-accounted for influence, the birds may not at the moment be in that precise direction, though the scent carries strongest from it; so the shooter is sometimes as much taken by surprise by the covey or a

single bird, as would be a man, looking intently forward to the left expecting to meet a friend, when he gets a sudden tap on the shoulder from behind or on his right. I never saw a man who was not a little startled on such occasions; yet the field-shooter must not permit himself any confusion should his game rise when he least expected them. This might occur from a variety of causes; we will suppose one. A covey had been for some time basking on a particular spot, but had run a minute or two before the dog approached; they had probably run down or across wind: it is quite possible the spot where they had long lain might send a stronger scent than do the running birds: so, though he might divert his looks to the right, the birds might actually be to the left. The sudden noise of partridges rising will itself require some time to habituate the young shot not to be a little confused and nervous when he hears it; but if it takes place when he least expects it, it requires a practical sportsman to remain quite collected, and like the pigeon-shot, to take cool and certain aim.

Whatever may be the game or object a man shoots at, perfect coolness is quite indispensable to making him a good shot. He may be as quick as he pleases; but quickness is quite different to confusion or indiscreet haste, a failing that often leads to direful consequences in momentous actions of our lives, and, unless corrected, will be found to mar the best-founded anticipations of success in any of the pursuits of the sportsman.

KNOWING WHAT WE WANT.

It may be said or supposed that every man knows this, and to a certain degree he does so; but the knowing how to get it, or the really knowing it when he sees it, is quite a different affair. For instance: a man wants a dress coat; he knows that—that is, he knows his want; but if he has lived till the age of twenty on a farm, or in a country village, he will have about as correct an idea of what is truly a dress coat, as he would have of the ceremonial and etiquette of a levee. This can be no matter of surprise, nor would it amount to the slightest indication of any want of acuteness of intellect, or even in a general way of any want of taste to admire what is in itself admirable; it merely shows him unaccustomed to a particular object, consequently unable to judge of its merits or imperfections.

We might suppose a tailor, whose business is to make coats, could set our country friend right; but a man being a tailor in no way insures his being capable of this. A first-rate London workman could, of course, do this; but the "Snip" of the village, albeit his showboard exhibits the mystic words "From London," knows no more of a dress coat than does his customer. If Snip was on speaking terms with Sir John's valet, he might get the loan of a pattern; but if he did he, would make, as poor Brummel would have called it, "a thing," and

a different thing to any he had ever before made; but he could no more convert his cloth into a London dress coat, than he could convert himself into a London superfine tailor.

It is pretty much the same as regards judgment and taste in horses, carriages, and the appointments necessary to either. Judgment, as relates to horses, is of several kinds, or rather to be shown in several ways. Some are particularly acute in this attribute in one way, some in another: a thorough judge must be perfect in all. There is the judgment of what is in himself a good kind of horse: then comes that of judging of the good kind for a particular purpose. This latter phase in judgment embraces a perfect knowledge of looks, size, speed, action, strength, and, as far as the eye or inquiry can go, of constitution; for, as in a coat, what would be quite proper for full dress in an evening in Belgravia, would be absurd at an ordinary dinner party, though, allowing for degrees of comparison, a dress or evening coat is proper for both places: it is the adapting the coat to the occasion that makes the well-dressed man. So the using the right sort of horse for the purpose chiefly constitutes the well-mounted man; and it is in this particular that so many men fail.

To be an equally good judge of horses for all purposes falls to the lot of no man: he who comes nearest to it is the best general judge. To be this, even in a moderate degree, is not shown by one man in fifty, though he may more or less have kept horses all his life. There is but one sort of man who can by any possibility arrive at being a good general judge: he must have begun early to accustom his eye to just and quick perceptions of merits and defects: he must have an inherent love for the animal to induce him to devote sufficient time to

perfect his eye and taste, and must practically make himself master of, or at least proficient in, all the sports or usages to which the horse is applied. He should be, as amateur, a jockey, steeple-chaser, hunting rider, trotting rider, a perfectly gentlemanly park rider, and a good coachman. I might be asked if, among his other practice, he should not be a military rider. This would be quite unnecessary. Anything that is handsome, and has commanding action and strength enough to carry the necessary weight, is good enough for a charger; and, supposing our judge to be a private individual, a perfect knowledge of chargers or troop horses would be quite or nearly useless to him: such horses are usually selected by persons making the purchase of them.

I do not at all mean to say it is necessary, or even of any consequence to the generality of persons, that they should practise all I have stated, because it is in no way necessary that such persons should be general good judges of horses; but if their pursuits induce the keeping horses of all sorts, it then becomes quite necessary they should be good judges of each—that is if they wish to be served with comfort and advantage by the animals they keep, independent of not paying twice as much in the purchase as the animal is worth, which a bad judge most indisputably would do.

It is quite true that we sometimes, nay frequently, see a man of fourteen or more stone a perfect judge of the powers of racehorses in general, or the pretensions of a particular one; but the chances are, this man has grown into fourteen stone weight, yet began his intercourse with them when he could ride six: his knowledge and judgment have grown with his growth, and racing or training is his business: he has learned that business as he would have learned to be a coachmaker, as a means

of support and emolument. In stating a man must be fond of the animal, and the sports or purposes he is employed in, to become a judge, I alluded to gentlemen, who, unless their inclination leads them that way, will not devote their time to the becoming proficient in any use the horse is applied to. The ordinary man becomes jockey, huntsman, or coachman, from circumstances: the gentleman would become neither, unless his predilections led him that way. It matters not whether practice in this is the result of taste or necessity, if that practice is carried on: the only difference is, the professional is obliged to use constant practice, the amateur is not. Hence why the former usually excels; and, if proof were wanting to show that it is practice from early youth, and continued afterwards, that causes this superiority in the professional, we need only call to our minds the fact that, in a general way, a very perfect huntsman knows little more of a race-horse than does the footman of the same family; and the most accomplished jockey could form but a most imperfect idea between the hunter fit to carry a heavy man in a thick strong country, and the one calculated for eleven stone in Leicestershire.

Among quite uneducated men we constantly see far better judges of horses for particular purposes than we meet among gentlemen; and it must ever be so. The jockey, trainer, huntsman, coachman, or even postboy, all from practice become judges of the horses they use: they are brought up among and constantly use such; but we find among gentlemen, whom practice brings acquainted with all sorts of animals, far better *general* judges of horses than are found among professionals. Nor can this be any matter of surprise: the professional, be his avocation what it may, devotes his time, thoughts,

and attention solely to the objects that contribute to his livelihood: the amateur devotes his to the different objects that promote his pleasure, though possibly still keeping his eye on the advantage an intimate knowledge of each invariably brings with it. Such knowledge may not extend to the being enabled to make any of them a source of much profit, for he scarcely hopes to do so; but he makes himself master enough for what he takes pleasure in, not to be much duped in the prosecution of it. Perhaps he learns to know enough to derive advantage in some way from his pursuits, either in popularity, in show, or in profit.

I am quite aware it is held ungentlemanly in a man selling his hunters or horses so as to derive profit, or, at all events, an increased price on the purchase money for them. I own a good deal of such feeling myself; and had I ever been a man of large fortune, my pride would have made me eschew anything of the sort: but not having been such, I was fair in an honourable, and I venture to hope gentlemanly way, to avail myself of such advantages as nerve and practice afforded me, and by these having made the raw material into a something that met the wishes and views of those whose necks and exertions were very properly at a higher premium than my own.

But disliking horse-dealing (for horse-dealing it is, let us mask it as we may) as much as I ever did, the pride that led to the dislike was wrong. The brewer or the banker gets into parliament: is recognized at a levee. The one avails himself of his knowledge of malt and hops (I beg pardon for supposing such to form the prominent feature in brewing), the other in a perfect knowledge how to turn other persons' money to the best advantage to the firm or sole chief. Why, then, in a

commercial country, should the turning anything to advantage meet reprehension?

But, says the brewer or banker, horse-dealers are the very scum of the earth. Say, not horse-dealers, but some or many of the class, this is true. But, on the other hand, call on Anderson of Piccadilly, a horse-dealer and no more, and you will meet with an *accueil*, a gentlemanly address, with a proper deference to superior station that you would only find corresponded with in the very high of those engaged in commerce of another description. There is not, *per se*, anything more derogatory in selling a horse at a profit than there is in trafficking in any other merchandise; the respectability of the man of trade depends on the man who trades, not on that he trades in.

We might naturally conclude that the man whose business is the dealing in horses must be a thoroughly good judge of them. To a certain degree he unquestionably is so; that is, each man becomes a judge of the particular class of animal in which he deals; for we are not to expect to find first-rate hunters, carriage horses, ladies' horses, and park horses in the same stables with omnibus horses, posters, and five-and-twenty guinea hacks to be used for all purposes. As different as are the classes of horses dealt in, are usually the classes of men who deal in them; all good judges of the kind of horse their eye is accustomed to criticise and appreciate, but neither of them as general judges to be called good ones. The one would estimate beauty, action, or pleasantry to the rider, at a higher price than each or all combined would fetch, in point of price, among the customers of the inferior dealer; the latter would not discriminate to the extent he ought between mediocrity and what approached perfection: he might

be shown a horse of the class in which he deals, and might very accurately value him at (say) forty pounds: he might be shown another; his judgment would be quite good enough to see this was a very superior animal to the other, so he sets him down at perhaps eighty, but he would never dream of valuing him at a hundred and fifty—he could not bring himself to consider there was a hundred and ten difference between the two. We will say such a man was owner of a good-looking little nag. As a hack, strong, fast, safe, free, yet quiet: five great recommendations in a hack. His head is a little inclined to be coarse, a little heavy on the bit, and his action, though good and safe, not strikingly showy. He shows him to a London dealer at a fair. Up comes another animal very much of the same cut, except having the head of a race-horse, which he carries in its proper place with the reins on his neck, and ten steps show his knee-up action to be first-rate. The London dealer is asked thirty pounds for the hack first shown. His answer is a civil one, and one much used: "Thank you for the sight of him. He is a very nice little horse; but I should not buy him." To the inferior dealer's surprise, he sees seventy pounds or more at once readily given. He has got, we will say, a wrinkle or two as to heads, mouths, and action; still it would not do for him to buy in at such proportionate advanced price for such perfections. Why? Simply because his customers are not judges enough of such attributes to give the price they are worth, or, at least, will bring with those who are. Supposing his customers, or some of them, did appreciate such things at their marketable price, they would not pay that price; so the inferior dealer still purchases and sells the sort he has been accustomed to; and of such, no doubt, he is a

good judge. Now, had the London dealer chosen to speak as he felt, he would have said, "Could I not have got the hack I have bought under one hundred pounds, I would not have left him; but I would not have yours in my stable." I have seen numbers of farmers on good-looking, sound, useful horses; I scarcely ever saw one on a neat, tasty, gentlemanly, or really fine horse. The young farmer really "knows what he wants," and gets it, which he easily can do. He wants a fair-looking, sound animal, that can slap along at a good rate; and though that pace would go nigh to dislocate the back of one accustomed to a neat quick-stepping hack, the young rustic is strong: so we may say nature "suits the back to the horse" as well as to the "burthen." Our hero also wants a saddle and bridle: as both looking new is his chief estimation of what will be a bit of show-off at fair or market, he employs a man to make both, whose chief line of business may be guessed at by the exhibition of a cart-collar or two on a peg outside the window, and a tuft of scarlet and blue to ornament the top of a winker-bridle within; shape and make are left to the taste of the maker, the only hint given being that the saddle shall be a smart smallish size, and the bit "a nobby one," by which is to be understood a shape that Lord Wilton would faint at, if he could faint at anything. Well, if young Jolter has got what he wants, why the above-mentioned noble gets no more; but the nature of the wants are somewhat different.

It is, no doubt, of the first importance to know what we want. If we mean to arrive at the object of our wishes, and get what we want, we must consider what term will best express the desired object. Now, I have plenty of acquaintance who could in a very few words

most clearly define anything in the horse way that they might want, from the race-horse to the shooting pony; but I have more, who, should they tell me they wanted a "hack," courtesy only would make me forbear saying —"Excuse me, you want no such thing." The truth is, such men merely want a good-looking quiet animal to carry them safely along the road or street. Hundreds of persons have complained to me of the difficulty of finding a horse to suit them. I never in my own person experienced this, except when wanting the money to get one. I ever found that when I had cash in Drummond's hands, there was always such horses as I wanted in the hands of some one disposed to sell; but then I flatter myself I did know what I wanted, where to seek it, and how to ask for it. We will suppose a man goes to a dealer's stable: one of those who do not know what to ask for, commonly begins—"Mr. A, or B, I want a horse." Our dealer bows, expecting a somewhat more definite description of what the gentleman wants. Finding this is not given, he is quite astute enough to guess from the gentleman's vague speech that he is one of the following three sorts of customers:—One who comes from curiosity, or, at all events, with only half an intent of buying; one who cannot describe what he wants, or really does not know. The dealer can, in such case, only mentally shrug up his shoulders, and invite the gentleman to look at, in his late majesty's phrase, "the whole squadron." Possibly the dealer does worm out of our gentleman that he wants a horse to carry him on the road; or he may use the term—"hackney." Our dealer now begins to fancy he knows a little what his customer wants, and with this end is conducting him to another stable to show him two or three clever cobs, and as many showy little blood-like park hacks. Judge

the man's astonishment, when he is desired to order from his box or stall a hunter that he values at a hundred and fifty, standing near sixteen hands; or a cab horse: this is half-sold to Lord Somebody for such purpose. What is to be done? it is quite useless to disturb either horse, or harass the man, by the useless proceeding of leading them out. If he ventures to remark that they are not adapted to the purpose specified, his customer at once sets up his bristles at the supposed indignity of any one dictating to him what he should ride. The dealer means no such dictation, for, of course, it is a matter of perfect indifference to him what any man may choose to ride; but he knows what the other does not—that the horses when out would be as different to what he supposed them when standing in the stables as if they were animals of a distinct species. He guesses pretty well that the only result of the trouble would be a remark from his customer something to this effect: "Dear me! I did not think him half so tall as I now find he is." We will now suppose the customer to have become tractable enough to suffer himself to be taken to the hacks I have alluded to, the chances are he will not look twice at either of them; for, notwithstanding the lesson he had in the horse he WOULD see out, not to trust to his own judgment of horses in their stable, he cannot conceive that a merry little hack, with good action, and making the most of himself when out, looks of twice the size and importance he did when engaged in the homely occupation of nibbling at his hay, or indulging in a half-doze in his stall. Such men will not be guided as to seeing out such animals as are likely to suit them, nor will they buy such if they are shown them. They have really no right whatever to go to a dealer's stable, or any

stable—let them go to a fair: there they will see scores of animals led and ridden; they would fix on what struck their fancy; and the end of it will be they will find their selection looking as different when in their own stable as they did when shown in a fair, as in an adverse ratio did the hundred-and-fifty-guinea nag in his box and out of it. If gentlemen who do not know what they want object to a fair, let them go to a London sale by auction—they will probably think they there see what they want. Let them buy: if they do not, in dealing phrase, get a "dig," and in American parlance "an almighty" one, I am a bad prophet, and things are wonderfully changed. A man, dealer or not, who has a horse or horses to sell, and knows what he is about, is quite willing that people who don't know what they want should go to the fair, the repository, or possibly he would add the d—, provided they do not come to him.

Now let us see how men who do know what they want usually act and express themselves. We will say one of these drives his stanhope into a dealer's yard, where it is known choice road-horses are to be found. The customer looks as if he knows what he is about; his horse comes stepping into the yard as if he went on India-rubber; stops handily; the tiger or groom jumps out and faces him; the horse perhaps playfully snaps or pretends to snap at him, but standing in an attitude that would seem to say to the dealer—"What do you think of *me?*" The owner, my life on it, does not bring out the "Mr., I want a horse." If he is a stranger, the dealer sees at a glance that whatever description of horse may be wanted he must be clever of the sort. If he is known, the above fact is well known also. "Weston (or any other name), I want a hack:" this alone from

such a man would do; but he perhaps adds, smiling, and pointing to the horse he has driven in, "something like this will do." Weston makes one of his politest and most deferential bows. "I should think his match would do for any one, sir; the only difficulty is to get such. If you will permit me, I will show you one I consider particularly clever." The chances are, there is a deal: each knows what is wanted. The customer does not give the trouble of seeing out what his critical and close-judging eye tells him is not *the sort*. The dealer does not pay his customer the bad compliment of attempting to impose any that are not, on his notice.

It is something the same if a judge goes to a hunting dealer. He does not merely state, "I want a hunter;" it would be tantamount to saying to a butcher, "I want a bit of meat." If the customer and the dealer know each other, the former has only to say—"Smart, have you anything by you that I should like, to carry myself?" The reply would be at once—"Yes, I have, sir;" or, "I shall be happy to show you what there is;" or, "I really have not at this moment anything in, I should say is likely to please you." What an infinity of trouble all this saves. The dealer knows he could not talk his customer into purchasing what is not in qualifications *his sort;* nor would he wish, perhaps, to do so. For, in many cases, retaining the custom of a man who frequently buys, far outweighs the consideration of selling him a horse he will afterwards find fault with; for let people say what they will, a respectable dealer cannot, without having recourse to proceedings that he would be quite above practising, impose upon a sensible man and a good judge, nor would he attempt or wish to do so.

Yet there are circumstances under which a man may go to the most respectable dealer in the world, pay a long price, and yet not get anything bordering on what he wishes to have. These are where he cannot make the man understand what he does want, or, supposing him to be able to do this, not permitting the dealer to put into his hands what would suit him, or being determined to buy what the other well knows would not. After he has found this out, he will not, even to himself, admit that he has acted like a fool: so he everywhere affirms the dealer as a rogue. If his friends perceive the animal is not at all suited to the purpose they see him used for, the chances are he says, "Ay, this is one of ——'s precious bargains" —— had nothing at all to do with selling him the horse, further than having him shown out when desired to do so, and then receiving his money; the truth is, the customer was an ass, and —— suffers in character from it.

Now I daily see persons who I really believe do know what they want, as respects horses; for, judging by the complacency and perfect air of satisfaction they exhibit, when riding or driving their animal, it is but natural to conclude they have got what they want, consequently now know what they wanted. They may very fairly say — "You see, I am one of those who do know what they want: I wanted just such a horse as this, and have, as you see, got him." The answer any judge would long to make would be—"You have, and a most precious beast you have got."

I have two persons now in my eye, both of whom I conclude have somehow or other got what they wanted. Should they want another, I should recommend them to show the one they have got as a pattern of their some-

what singular wishes. They can take their cherished animal to a dealer: they will not be reduced to the very ambiguous assertion of "I want a horse." They have only to show the specimen of their taste, and put the definite question—"Pray, Mr. Tasty, have you a horse like this for sale?" "No, sir, really I have not—thank God," inwardly adds Tasty. "I am not surprised at that," replies the customer, somewhat triumphantly; "I was a long time in finding this," patting him on the neck as he says it. "I should think you was," gravely replies Tasty, whose estimation of the animal by his looks is in no way heightened on seeing his action as he leaves the yard.

I must, however, give a short sketch of the two persons I have alluded to, and their horses, as they pass my window twice a day. The one is a tall, gentlemanly-looking man, with a seat that would be at once shown by a person sitting on a high gate without a place he could lodge or rest his feet upon. I conclude this is meant to be military. The brown beast he rides is of ordinary size, neither blood-like, cob-like, hunter or racer-like, or, in fact, like anything but itself. His head is not altogether so outrageously bad, but it is set on like that of a hammer, and is one of those that convince you there can be no energy in the body to which it belongs. The legs are very well put on, if they belonged to a deal table; and they progress as do the arms of a pair of compasses, when we make the latter, as it were, walk. The brute appears to have fair loins, this arising from his being so narrow across the hips that no hip-bone is shown; so all looks smooth and level. Independently of which, he is in point of flesh in tip-top condition. He sports a splendid crimson forehead-band, perhaps in

imitation of royalty; and a kind of military curb-bit, with which we cannot suppose he could be taken alive, even were he in the Crimea. It is really delightful to see such perfect satisfaction as horse and man exhibit in their journey through life, or, at all events, towards Fulham.

The other sports a moustache, one of the half-shooting, half-walking jackets, usually all winter a pair of the Life Guardsman's japanned boots, hunting spurs, and at all seasons an immense hunting crop, with a keeper as long and as large as a saddle-flap. His nag shows a good deal of breeding, weedy legs, and still more weedy body. I always see him in what I suppose he considers a hunting gallop, which may account for every bit of muscle being hunted from the body of the nag. The master occasionally pretends to stand in his stirrups, showing, no doubt, as he conceives, how our Derby jockeys perform the preliminary canter. He looks at his horse's action first down the near, then off-side; and as the animal sprawls something like a tired dromedary, no doubt the owner figures to himself the advantage of stride. He has, I make no doubt, at present got what he wants; but, unless he alters his pace, I suspect the shadow of it will only shortly remain.

Has neither of these persons any one to tell him better? Doubtless there are many who could do so; but it really would be sheer cruelty to put the first out of humour with his nag; and, as to the other, I should not conceive any one could do so. There is no reason to suppose the first is not a man of sense, and, save and except in riding horses and saddlery, a man of taste. The latter, should he wish to show his horse as a pattern by which to get another, of course he can do so; but

should he ever want to get a sensible man as an acquaintance, let us hope he will show something as unlike himself as two beings of the same race can possibly be: for he is one of those who does not know what he wants, nor will, unless some kind vision in his dreams should whisper "*Brains!*"

ON CHOICE OF COUNTRY.

"Suit the action to the words, the word to the action."

Suit the country to the man, the man to the country.

Our immortal bard took upon himself, through the medium of the child of his brain, the noble but eccentric Hamlet, to give excellent advice to players: why may not the more humble writer of plain prose claim the same privilege as regards sportsmen? Not that in this case the advice may be excellent; yet I so far flatter myself as to believe that, if acted upon, it will be found judicious.

Who proposes to give such advice, and make such remarks as this brief exordium leads us to anticipate? And is he qualified to give and make such? The first question is easily answerd. Good readers, it is one who has the honour of being a somewhat old acquaintance—Harry Hieover. Not such authority as regards his theme as is Hamlet, I admit; and can feel no offence should the reader, in making his comparison, quote from the same play—"Hyperion to a satyr." So be it; but Hyperion not being *in propriâ personâ* present, and satyrs now-a-days confining themselves to wilds and woods that we of 1856 "wot not of," we must take what we can get, and, in accordance with the ready manager's direction, "snow brown."

The second question is not to be so readily answered as the first, inasmuch as qualification as regards particular persons must be estimated by others; for few men are impartial judges of their own, and certes, authors are, to say the best of them, not to be implicitly trusted to in such estimation.

I knew I had seen a good many packs of foxhounds, and had, at different times, seen a good many fox-hunting countries; but since beginning this article, I find, on reckoning the latter up, I have more or less ridden in sixteen of them, to which I may add two in Wales. Some of these, of course, I know well; but I do not admit a man's right to say he knows a country because, for the mere gratification of curiosity, he may have sent horses to it for, perhaps, two or three weeks, to get a peep at a pack, a field, and the country. Of the general nature of the latter he may certainly judge, after having been at the principal fixtures of the hunt; of the general appearance and riding of the field he may judge, supposing him to have seen a few average runs; of their general bearing as gentlemen or others he may judge; yet let him pause ere he gives an opinion of the pack or their huntsman. But more of this anon.

I have now shown on what grounds I presume to say men should suit the country to themselves—that is, select a country that suits them (if circumstances permit); if not, troth they must suit themselves to the country, or be content, when they cross it, to be "nowhere." There are certainly many men who would be found in such enviable situation, hunt in what country they might. To such I should say, leave the red coat at home, and profess to come out only to see "the find." If an agreeable man, all will be glad to see you; and, riding as you like, or can, no one will make a remark

on your horsemanship or your horse; but, unless you mean to ride, don't ride a grey. If in a strange country, something I have ever seen expected from the gentleman in scarlet on the grey. Such are like a general's hat and plume, to which all eyes are turned, and we don't expect to see either under a haystack. "There goes the general!" or "There goes the grey!" sets everyone on the *qui vive*, unless in cases where it would be "Oh, it's only Gonohow on his grey! What the devil is he poking about there for?" This won't do: no, if you are seen well appointed at the find, and on a grey, sail away the grey must, or never show his nose or your own at a second meeting of that hunt.

I have known men who could and would veritably *ride* in *any* country; but then they were men who had more or less ridden in all sorts of countries: and even such men will shine more brilliantly in places that suit their style of riding than in those that do not. And, again, the horse must know what he is about as well as his rider, or both will show to disadvantage. It is true, nerve will drive a horse accustomed to deliberate jumping through a bullfinch, or send him flying over a large fence; but nerve will not make a horse, accustomed to fair leaps that he could see and measure, careful in a blind country; and being coffined in a ditch covered with brambles, is a mighty inglorious way of finishing the day, to a man accustomed to "from field to field" work.

There are others who are really fine horsemen and very forward riders in their own country, be that what it may, that could or would not "gee" at all in others; in some cases, from want of a particular kind of nerve required in some countries; in others, from want of judgment as regards such country and fencing as they

were unaccustomed to. It is true there are men so unfortunate as regards nerve, that it fails them on all occasions where danger of any sort presents itself; others whose iron nerve nothing can shake; and, again, a medium sort, who can "screw their courage to the sticking point" in apparent dangers to which they are accustomed, yet shrink from those they "know not of." In the hunting-field, men who will fearlessly ride down the all but perpendicular hills on the Brighton Downs, will hesitate at a gate, and a fair-sized brook is magnified by their estimation into an impracticable sheet of water. I have seen men rattle their horses across fifty or a hundred yards of cart-ruts on the Hampshire plains, at which a steeple-chase rider would shudder; and then, if an ordinary flight of rails presented themselves, would *pro tem.* show as "pounded:" such is the force of habit. Yet, as regards nerve, I cannot permit gentlemen to quite shelter themselves under the plea of want of habit as an excuse for want of at least attempt; for if mounted on a horse they know to be capable of doing what they see others do, it is direct want of determination in the rider if he declines. It would be going a great way too far to even insinuate that a man was a general coward who rode timidly in the field; but this I will say, I never yet knew a very bold rider to whom it would be quite safe for any man to offer an affront. I have not the honour of knowing anything of Admiral Lyons; he may be a good horseman for all I know, or he may rarely have been in a saddle; but this, I think, we may be quite sure, if the admiral was induced to take a day's fox-hunting, he would push his living Agamemnon along in the field as determinedly as he does his floating one in the Euxine. I have read that poor Captain Nolan's reply to Lord Cardigan was, "Such are the orders, and there

is the enemy," or words to that effect—quite enough for such a soldier as the noble lord. At them he went: so, if in less dangerous and sylvan warfare, it was said to the gallant admiral, "There go the hounds, and there are the rails" or brook, at either he would go, and, probably forgetting where he was, he would roar out "Go a-head!" as he would were a really formidable foe before him.

Independent of direct courage, nerve, or determination, there is a peculiar attribute about some men that at times leads to what stands in their stead—this is excitable feelings, or call it enthusiasm. This I have often seen induce some men to ride very fairly in a chase, who in cool blood would not charge a common hurdle. Such men might possibly, in the excitement of the moment, be as forward as any in an assault on an enemy; but it would not make them one of the cool, determined, and ever-brave 93rd. Nor are such men ever cool, determined horsemen across country: one rattling fall so far sobers their enthusiasm, that they begin to think of home; and should the pack be a field off by the time the quondam enthusiast has got up and "shook his feathers," it is all over; he then shakes his head; the "go" is taken out of him—save and except the go home, where, by the time the hounds have found their second fox, he would be found in his easy chair, his housekeeper or good wife vamping him up, after his fall, with a basin of sago and some brandy in it, and wishing, for the sake of his family, "he would not ride so *desperately*." The cooler hand would take the thing (I don't mean the sago and brandy, but the fall) as a matter, not of course, but as to be expected; would, as soon as down, get clear of his horse, then get on his legs, and as coolly, but somewhat more quickly, mount his

nag as he did by the cover side. Away he sails, getting a little additional steam up for the occasion; and if he is a man of good temper, sense, and judgment, treats his horse in accordance with them. If the fall was from laziness, depend on it Lazybones won't go indolently at the next fence; if the fall was unavoidable from any circumstance, he speaks encouragingly to his horse, that he may not be cowed or alarmed at the next obstacle to be encountered. As relates to the first party, we will only say so much for (not Buckingham, but) mere enhusiasm.

I have heard some fox-hunters—who ride particularly boldly when their legs are under the mahogany, *after* hunting—state that they did not think it required more nerve in the steeple-chase rider than the fox-hunter; thus, we will presume, modestly hinting, that themselves, as riding fox-hunting, could, if they chose it, enact Oliver, Powell, Beecher, Archer, &c. &c. We will give such visionary steeple chasers as the after-dinner riders credit for really having too much good sense to believe themselves equal to what they wish others to think them; but if there should be any who really do thus deceive themselves, if they had once taken an airing in a steeple-chase on such a horse as "Trust-me-not," instead of riding their own "Safe-and-sure" in a fox-chase, peradventure they would have found they had not exactly the nerve or hands of Mason. We are quite aware that professional steeple-chase riders risk their persons for pay, consequently often dare what few, if any, men, or even themselves, would do merely in the hunting-field; thus, those who are prone to decry what others do, may say of steeple-chase jocks, "No credit to them—they are paid for the risk they run!" I dare say they are quite indifferent as to whether such decriers gave them

any *credit* or not for what they do, and they would be very foolish if they gave the others any if they rode for them. Any act that requires courage in the performance, whether paid for or not, is a courageous act, and as such has its merit; and if any one thinks otherwise, let us ask him if he would risk his dear person for, say, twenty pounds? I think it would be found he would decline the offer if made him. We have fox-hunters, as noblemen, and others as gentlemen, who can and do ride as boldly (and a few of such as well) in steeple-chases as professionals; but pardon me, brother fox-hunters, if I say that think as you may when not brought to the point, or, still further, *the post*, there is not one in fifty of you would brave a steeple-chase. A bruising rider as a fox-hunter is usually a jovial and a safe companion, though possibly not an intellectual one; but a boasting rider I must hold as "a disgrace unto our order."

We have another character who is independent of the rider who can always go in his own country; the enthusiast, who will at times, and for a time, go in many countries; the determined one, who will always go anywhere; and the timid one, who goes nowhere. We have, in sporting phrase, the "fast man:" this does not mean merely that he keeps fast horses, consequently goes fast with hounds, but that he is fast in all he does, does all that is fashionable and produces *éclât*, and goes "to the top of the tree" in all he does. He may also be called an enthusiast; but his enthusiasm is not like that of our sago-and-brandy friend — enthusiasm in hunting, but in not permitting, where he can help it, any man going beyond him in anything he undertakes, whether in show, expense, or proficiency in the doing it. He keeps a large stud because he sees Lords Wilton, Forrester, Gardener, &c., &c., do so; he would probably

treble the number because he sees Sir Richard Sutton with between sixty and seventy hunters, did he not recollect Sir Richard is master of the hounds, so competition here is uncalled for. He may care but little for the opera, but it shows "fast" to have been at the holt or pasture in the morning, and to be seen in the Haymarket at night. It is "fast" that his *chère amie* should have one of the most stylish equipages in London, and one of the most elegant *bijous* of a house in Mayfair; it is fast in others, and among them, perhaps, his most *particular* (query, in one sense of the word) friends, should (of course, *sub rosa*) have their occasional share of what he entirely pays for; and formerly, when legally permitted, it would have been fast in him to have put a bullet into the "particular" for so doing. Matrimony, under ordinary circumstances, would be considered as a very slow affair indeed; but the lady he selects is of a fast family, enjoys the *prestige* of being a beauty, and the reality of being the most dashing woman in London; coolly loses or wins a few "ponies" on a race, and if playfully offering to take ten to one, when she knows the odds are only five, no fast man could refuse to book a bet offered in the silvery tones of *the* Lady Angelina. It is not to be supposed the daughters of a very fast family have large fortunes: no matter, the fast man has, and the lady has position, and *éclát* in that position, which is an equivalent. Nor is the want of fortune a matter of much consequence after all; for when two such fast ones come together, they are sure to make "the pace so good," that any fortune would be shortly "pumped out;" and, as Jaques says, "so ends this great eventful history." Our fast man may be a titled one, yet not entitled to spend much money, inasmuch as he has very little to spend; but great credit is

often given to a title in two senses of the term, and in both sometimes more than it deserves, and title and credit will for a time achieve wonders. A millionaire has a daughter—no matter if in face and figure she is such as would cause a horse accustomed to be the bearer of beauty to lift his head from his oats in astonishment at both; old Numps determines his "darter" shall be my lady. Now, there is nothing at all slow in one of the handsomest and most elegant men in London turning "my darter" into his lady, provided she has "the tin." Ye gods, what a wedding! Hide your diminished heads, ye daughters of our oldest noble houses; your parents never gave such. The breakfast was a civic feast; but instead of being in the neighbourhood of Cornhill, was in the polite regions of Belgravia; the elegant bridegroom is introduced as my son, Lord ————, to the chiefs of half the wards east of Temple Bar, and only escapes when the happy pair set off in a new and elegant post-chariot for the noble bridegroom's seat in ———shire. Is it to be wondered at if now he makes "the pace awful?" What did he marry for? My darter, now my lady, has been accustomed enough to show and expense; but the kind of expense was so different from that she sees now, that she is no judge of its extent. Old Numps hears of it and is gratified, for he has gained his object. He ventures occasionally to call a lord by his christian name —a privilege at one time undreamt of. He hears of "my son, Lord ————," hunting six days a-week. He only concludes that as "the dogs are kept" they may as well hunt six days as two: of any difference of expense he knows no more than does my lord whether Russian bonds or Russian tallow are dear or cheap, at one price or another. "But pace will tell." "It is the

pace that kills;" and make it fast enough, whether the fortune be the five thousand of Lady Angelina, or the hundred thousand of Miss Numps, matters little: the length of the purse is different, it is true—so is the length of walking-sticks, but each has an end; and six days a-week fox-hunting, with other expenses to correspond, must find that purses have an end, and (the contents gone) an empty one. Numps, when, somewhat to his astonishment, is, by my lord's desire, applied to by my lady, "shells out like a trump." But an end is found to this as well as the former purse, and our fast man shelters himself by saying, as did a friend of mine whose father had given him seventy thousand pounds, "I can scarcely blame myself, for I really thought my father had been a rich man." Our fast man went as long as he could, no one can deny that, and no man can do more; so now my son, Lord ————, perforce can only live on the money he so anathematized old Numps for insisting should be tied up for the use of my darter.

Such things have happened and do happen, not in accordance with the phrase "the best regulated families," but in those regulated as many are.

I think it must be quite clear that where distinct propensities and attributes exist, they could not all feel at home and pleased in the same sort of country. It is said, in that most excellent play, "John Bull," "Justice is justice, Mr. Thornberry;" so it may be said fox-hunting is fox-hunting: it certainly is hunting the fox, be it done where or how it may; but it varies about as much as does shooting grouse on the wild heath, and shooting pheasants in a preserve, though each and both are shooting. Fox-hunting is a pastime, and no more, elevate it in our ideas as we may; and this, like every other justifiable amusement, a man has a right to enjoy

in such way as is most agreeable to himself. We may be permitted a good-natured laugh at an awkward or weak attempt at what we may be aware we can do better; and I must admit that as regards hunting, riding, driving, and other sporting acts, we may be led to something like surprise that some men doing such things as they do, should do them, or attempt to do them, at all. Still, if a man could find amusement in rowing himself about on a pond fifty yards diameter, let him row away: Cole or Messinger would laugh at him, but, at all events, he shows his sense in not getting in their way; he makes a prudent "choice of" water for his aquatic pretensions. So I would recommend those who have also their peculiar pretensions in the hunting way, to be equally prudent in their "choice of country."

Some men hunt for air, exercise, and out-of-door society: to such I should recommend the Sussex hills; they will there get the first to their heart's content; let them by all means mount a particularly rough-trotting cob or horse; either will give them as much exercise in three hours as the generality of sportsmen would tolerate, *by the same means*, in three weeks; a pack of slow beagles will, to a certain extent, keep the company together, so as not to materially interrupt a long story. And I give them another recommendation, which is, under similar circumstances, to avoid cross-grained devils like me and some others, who, like me, hate hills, hate wind and cold, hate beagles, and, above all, hate being talked to when hunting; for, possibly, under the influence of hills, cold, wind, beagles, and dread of being hooked in for a talk, they might find the "choice of" companionship they had made was somewhat unfortunate. Such talkers, and there are such, are veritable bores; not because they are not sportsmen—not because they can't ride,

but because they can and will talk. Let them make a judicious "choice of friend;" they will then be at their ease, and leave others so.

There are men who are really fond of hunting, capital judges of it, and thorough sportsmen, but from some constitutional cause cannot, even when excited by their favourite pursuit, make their way, or, in more sporting phrase, "live with hounds," if the country presents any serious obstacles. They are quite as good—nay, perhaps better—sportsmen, so far as intimate knowledge of hunting and hounds goes, than is Lord Wilton himself; but his lordship *can* ride, and they can't. In great part of Surrey, for instance, such men could thoroughly enjoy their favourite pursuit; for if, as Pat says, figuratively speaking, they could "jump a potato trench," they colud ride in such country, they would be welcome there, and indeed everywhere, as being good sound sportsmen; and if they even there got into a difficulty, any man who *could* ride, if also a good-natured fellow, would feel pleasure in helping them out of it. But this would have to be done all day in a difficult country, and this could not be expected; so let them go where it would rarely be wanted, and in a country where a man is not called upon for any bold riding, and men who can't ride are as well off as those who can. It is not a bad maxim to observe in all things—if in certain situations we are aware we cannot show superiority, seek others where the reverse will not be conspicuous.

On the other hand, I remember, when hunting with the Duke of Richmond's hounds, a gentleman came into that country from Leicestershire, who brought several very fine horses with him. One day, after a very pretty run and kill, on the general field expressing their satisfaction, the Leicestershire gentleman in round terms

d—d the country, vowing if he was obliged to remain in it, he would "sell his horses, and never ride anything but a sixty-pound hack." Nothing could be more ungentlemanly, insolent, or injudicious than such speech. He was with the hounds of a nobleman highly esteemed, ever zealous to show sport, in which he was ably seconded by his huntsman; and the country, if not first-rate, was one that produced fair average runs. He offended half the field, who probably did not give more than the sixty mentioned as hack price for their hunters; and though the huntsman was too well trained to show insolence, however provoked, to a gentleman, no attention or civility could be expected after a speech so disparaging of the hunt. This gentleman, after the season, had one of his horses trained for the Hunters' Stakes, and, to the delight of every one, he was third; beaten for second place by a horse that had been bought for just half this gentleman's estimated hack price. Then, as characteristic of the would-be overbearing of the man, he grossly abused the jockey who rode the horse, and swore he had been "pulled" throughout the race. The jockey, who was a highly-respectable farmer, and fine horseman, very quietly told the Leicestershire hero, that if he dared repeat what he had said, he would horsewhip him on the spot; and this he was quite capable of doing, as it was only by wasting and a very light saddle he was enabled to ride twelve stone.

There can be no doubt but that it would be truly annoying to a man accustomed to fast countries and flying fences, with a stud that could and had gone first flight in such countries, to find himself in one where a good kind of half "gee-who" sort of horse could really, from the nature of the country, and the blindness, intricacy, and frequency of the fences, follow hounds quite

as closely as could the crack; yet so it is, racing speed is all but useless in small enclosures. A greyhound would never catch a rabbit in a cover: the former has speed, but cannot use it—the latter has singular quickness, which he can use with advantage.

We will now revert to men and their style of riding. When my father was in Essex, whenever I had a horse that I wished to ease a bit, I always sent him there; I knew he would get every attention and (to him) a holiday.

In Essex there lived a medical man, who subsequently became physician, a favourite with every one, a keen sportsman, and, in his peculiar way, a good horseman. The doctor kept a couple, sometimes three nags, who did everything; he also kept, for the use of one of his two very pretty and accomplished daughters, a very clever pony, and well would the little beauty put him along with hounds. What larger horses did at once, the miniature hunter and his fair mistress did at twice; but neither ever refused a fence. I believe about thirty was the doctor's maximum price for horses. The price I set on one I had sent down was about twice that of the whole medical stud; but on seeing him (the doctor) determined to grace the new diploma by a (to him) new sort of horse, as intimate friends, my father would not let the doctor have the horse without riding him with hounds. He did so, and expressed his obligation; "for," said he, "if I had bought him I could not have ridden him in comfort; I must have ridden like a jockey, I could not sit down on him as I do on my own. His trot is very good for a hunter, but you know I ride up and down like a postboy." And so it was: the doctor was used to short-going nags, the stride of my horse was quite different; and from the doctor's profession requiring

constant road-riding, he did veritably bob up and down, as he said, like a postilion. However, I suited him afterwards with a dun mare that I had taken in exchange from a sporting veterinary surgeon. She had been constantly used as his hack, but the physician made a hunter of her—at least, one of his sort of hunters. We will suppose the doctor in a grass country, on a thoroughbred nag. Why, he would have sat and looked about as happy as used to do Batty's monkey, when tied on to the saddle in a mock steeple-chase at the Hippodrome. Poor Jacko was not allowed his "choice of country."

Whatever carries with it the air or reality of aristocracy, fashion, and expense, always bears also about it a kind of charm that, strange to say, seems to equally engage the attention of high and low. We hear the latter talk of the great, or even the Court, as if they were conversant with the habits of both; whereas, if they ever do get in close contact with the *great*, it is with Mr. Hales, the giant landlord of Drury Lane; and the court with whose manners and habits they are conversant, is some court in the same locality. So we hear men whose one nag gives them an occasional day's hunting, talking as familiarly of Leicestershire as if they were constantly seen with the Quorn. Hundreds call such country the elysium of hunting, who would find it in every way anything but elysium to them. It is, perhaps, so to men of high fashion and large fortune; but from what I know of it, I can only say I had just sense enough to see it was very well for men of small means to go to for a short—a very short—time, but no longer than that time. They may carry on the war without causing sarcastic remark—nay, may by some be welcomed; but to stay there, unless an unavoidable inha-

bitant, would be the height of folly. To go there *for a season* would be a puerile and vain attempt to become "one of them," calling forth only ridicule while it lasted, and probably much pecuniary inconvenience afterwards. It would not give such a person as I describe the *éclât* of being a Leicestershire man in the sense the term implies, but that of a very weak one, who in such a country attempted that to which, on the score of expense, he had no pretension.

I quite admit that by those of high birth and standing more courtesy is usually shown than by inferior persons; and if all Leicestershire men were prototypes of the late Lord Alvanly, a man might take his three horses into their country, and would meet, if his general bearing warranted it, no more unpleasantry there than if his stud consisted of thirteen. But he would not meet all Alvanlys: Leicestershire men are, as a *tout ensemble*, a *clique*, and among that there is a double-refined *clique*, whose *accueil* to strangers, unless they consider them of consequence, is anything but agreeable. Such men are no little hypercritical in their observations, which goes even to the cut of a man's coat, which, unless it carries with it the air of having been turned out by an "artiste" who charges unlimited price for unlimited credit, places the wearer in their estimation in a very equivocal position. The nag may be happy enough to meet their perfect approbation, the saddle may look like a Wilson, the bit like a Latchford, but the coat is still probably a stumbling-block. If so, should the wearer go well, and presume to keep "a place," and that a good one, in the run, he may be flattered, if within ear-shot, to find he is noticed by "Who the d—l is the fellow?" or by finding at the first check an eye-glass levelled at him, saying as plainly as lorgnette can say—"Where the d—l

do you come from?" Depend on it there is rather more than a fair sprinkling of these double-distilled in the far and justly-famed metropolitan countries. I do not pretend to dictate to others, but I should say that humble rustics like myself would be wise in "choice of country" as a home, to fix on a more rusticated one.

It might be asked by some one who had never tried the crack countries, why it is necessary to have such large studs there? It is not absolutely necessary for a mere sportsman to have such, but doing as the *élite* do renders it so; the pastures are large, the covers few, the fences strong, scent lies well, and the hounds uncommonly fast, and, above all, as regards them, they meet few impediments. This will show any hunting man that first-rate horses as to qualifications are indispensable; and even such horses must be carefully ridden if a man means the same nag to carry him the run. But mind, such riding borders on the "slow." Why? Because if you have not always a second horse you are one of the slows. It may be said that men cannot want to go faster than the hounds; consequently, if two men have ridden fairly to them, one horse cannot go faster or further than the other: this premise is doubtless generally correct; but, good reader, you will find, and not unfrequently, in Leicestershire there are men who not only want to, but too often do, go faster than the hounds at times. Now, by riding fairly to hounds I mean riding so as to see all they do, not riding over all sorts of ground, stroke for stroke with them; if you do, you will find the second nag quite necessary, and that early in the day. "D—n the expense!" is an old saying among fools with more money than wit; "D—n the horse!" says the man with more horses than—we will say, reader, perhaps you or I. Always riding well *to* hounds shows

the horseman and the sportsman: always riding *with* hounds merely shows—what? The double-refined—"*verbum sat.*"

I have said every man has a right to take his amusement in the way that best suits his taste: he has so, nor must his ordinary sense be called in question by any little peculiarities in his mode of doing so. I have, however, endeavoured to show he may evince much good sense in his "choice of country;" and this, taken in figurative language, may (I think it will be found) be applicable to many pursuits in life.

THE GOLDEN BALL.

I DO not mean the Golden Ball who for some time stood not "tip-toe on the misty mountain's top," but on the somewhat slippery summit of the hemisphere of fashion. "Gay being! born to flutter," goes the song, and flutter he did for a time, like the many-coloured insect alluded to, then shut up his gorgeous wings, and the Golden Ball, except to intimate friends, was shortly only mentioned as a something that for a time had attracted the attention of the gaping multitude. The Golden Ball to which I allude, who boasted of proud elevation, not of fashion, it is true, but as "*parvis componere magna solibam*," its elevation arose from the humble circumstance of being placed on a post. What brought it there, or by whom placed, I have heard, but now forget; many, however, could answer this; but whatever that answer may be, there it stood, its locality a frequent meet or "turn out" of the Queen's (then the King's) hounds; whether the ball or its post still remains I know not, but the association of ideas connected with it will remain with the writer till all ideas cease with the heart's last beat.

A pretty locality is, or was, that of the Golden Ball, on the road from Wokingham to Bracknell; to its left Binfield Common, which, though not of large extent, afforded the means of giving a horse at exercise a

breather, ending with a straight quarter of a mile uphill to the right of Bracknell Common, over whose turf I have had many a short spin; and in its immediate vicinity two very small covers, into which the deer was usually uncarted: it is thirty years since I saw this take place; then I had, figuratively speaking, the Golden Ball in my hand, and much more in perspective; this, doubtless, gives everything "*couleur de rose*;" still was the locality beyond doubt a pretty and somewhat picturesque meet or turn-out.

But there *was* another circumstance totally unconnected with hunting, that to an enthusiastic or commonly reflecting mind gave unwonted interest to the place, and cast a halo of veneration round the spot. Near it, in a small patch of thin remaining forest, that the axe had spared, stood a large tree; and on its bark had been cut —as tradition asserted, by the poet's own hand—in large letters, "HERE POPE SUNG:" if so, sacred remain that tree. If written by other hand, surely that hand appertained to one of no ordinary imagery of mind; but of that fervid feeling, that while it affords its possessor moments, hours, or days of ecstatic rapture, as certainly subjects him to ages of bitterness of soul, of which the dull or apathetic mind can form no conception.

"What has Pope to do with the turn-out?" cries he whose attributes of mind can find him no better way of passing the hour of his return from hunting, and that of his feed, than walking, and smacking his whip about his stable-yard, and little knows whether we allude to the author of the "Essay on Man," or the Pope who makes his essay from the gates of the Imperial City: certes, my friend Pope has or had as little to do with it as you have had to do with Pope.

"What"—cries the half-bred miss who has just

learned enough to be aware of the heads of some of the subjects on which the great poet wrote, but has never mixed enough among the *élite* to know what hunting-men are—"what can the vulgar hunting-men know of Pope? Does he mean Pope who writes about his cutting off somebody's hair?" The same, miss; and he afterwards shaved her father every day. A pony to a pumpkin she believes it.

Referring to the Golden Ball brings forth other and many reminiscences more intimately connected with the hunting-field. How many faces that I remember meeting at this place, beaming with health and joyous anticipation, are now still, and perhaps forgotten! Some of those then in middle-life I now see in the decrepitude of age; others that then, like myself, were envious of the title of man, now show, by the insidious wrinkle, that they have not escaped the vicissitudes of life; others, from the ardent and bold horseman, have dwindled into the staid family man, without enough of nerve left to face a common hurdle, or the inclination to do so.

But to particularize a few of the then most ostensible characters there, who that had once seen him can forget Tighe Dominick Tighe? He was in truth a character; his velvet cap with half its covering torn or worn off its front, its white underlining rendering the loss of velvet still more conspicuous, and that worn as the hunting appendage to the head, without its renovation or amendment ever being contemplated by its wearer; the neck-cloth, if black, worn light-coloured by frequent wear; if white, become dark from the same cause; his scarlet coat, and such a coat as it ever must have been as to make, worn till the now peripatetic sportsman, Paddy, would hold it too bad to be sported on a racing-day; his boots—name them not in Gath—causing by their

surface a surmise as to whether a brush in the hand of the cowboy or a wet cloth in that of a country wench had made the attempt to produce a blackened appearance, these rarely encumbered with more than one spur; his good-humoured countenance glorying in the addition of a pair of spectacles of such strength and dimensions as rendered the approach of the wearer, if the sun happened to be in his face, as conspicuous as that of a carriage with its lamps lit; his seat, by the forward inclination of the body, I presume he thought a racing one; while his face, and consequently specs, moved from side to side as if, like Tam-o'-Shanter, he was galloping away from some foul fiend that he expected to see come up to his side.

Poor Dominick! thou wast indeed "a fellow of infinite variety," extraordinary anecdote, highly-cultivated education, and could be, if and when so disposed, an intelligent companion and perfect gentleman; how few and far between were such moments we will not say: of thy bearing at other times my pen shall not chronicle the account.

Dominick was a fourteen-stone man, and when mounted on Strideaway—who stood an honest seventeen hands, under the standard—so stalwart a horse and rider were not often met with hounds; I say met, for seeing either afterwards depended wholly on the line the deer took: if over the enclosures, no over-ridden hound ever accused Dominick as the cause of his disaster; but in a burst along one of the straight rides from Tower Hill, Swinley, or Easthamsted Park, the big one did stride away in earnest; he could on the race-course beat most half-breds of his day, and was a match for most thoroughbred ones for a mile, but neither master nor servant was a match for time.

Another, of a far different sort and character, was certain to be found at the Golden Ball, or any fixture in the Berkshire or Buckinghamshire country: his light, spare, gentlemanly figure, firm seat, fine hands, strong nerve, and the very best-selected of studs in the finest possible condition, enabled him not merely to "live," but shine with hounds in any country; he looked all over a horsman, while his courteous manners towards those with whom he chose to converse, which were not many, showed at once the man of family and fashion; any of those who hunted with the royal hounds at that period must recognise the one alluded to, for there was not another Captain Vyse. If ever I broke the tenth commandment, it has been when I have seen him on his black horse. Better bred, faster, and I believe better horses he had; but so perfectly gentlemanly snaffle-bridled a hunter I do not recollect ever to have seen; and nothing of what he could do was lost under the steerage of his master, whose wiry form seemed as if intended to ride and live for ever. May he approach as near it as mortality will permit! One fault the Captain had—as a hunting rider a sad one it was, but still one often run into by the right sort: whether necessary or not, he could no more resist a tempting gate or fence than he could fly; the sight of a paddock was delightful to him, and I verily believe if anything would have tempted him to ride over a pedestrian, his opening a gate would have led to such a result; at all events, I know he once nearly capsized me, horse and all, when hounds running hard I took one before him, having by chance a length the lead; his perfectly gentlemanly habits induced him to excuse himself, but his roguish smile said as plainly as smile could say it, "I'll serve you the same

again if I catch you usurping my prerogative ;" and that was taking the lead.

Many characters I could mention of that time, who are as much in my mind's eye now as they were then in *propriæ personæ* before me ; I will, however, only allude to two. These, it somewhat singularly happened, were both natives of the Emerald Isle, both most determined riders, and both in succession lived in the same house, close to Wingfield church. These were, I am sure, taking it in a joking and good-humoured sense of the words, terrible bugbears to the Captain ; for though he could outpace both, he could not pound them ; nor at fencing, no matter what, they would not be denied ; high or wide, they would have it ; if chance placed them in the van, they would shew him what Irish nags could do in the jumping way ; if the Captain led, had he faced the Thames he could not shake them off. The one (Mr. Shawe) had only one horse that he hunted, a close-set round-foreheaded cock-tail in the literal sense of the word, and cock-tail looking animal he was, but among enclosures a sad teazer to the Captain's two-hundred-guinea nags ; under such circumstances he was their match at all games, and at a large intricate fence, that few would think of facing, from its requiring a one-two-and-away sort of a jumper, Pat was too cunning for them ; he brought his Galway practices with him, had always "a leg to spare," and would place it on a dinner plate if offering good foothold.

The other was a sixteen-stone man : his little-in-number-but-large-in-size stud consisted of three ; as in the case with Shawe, it was useless for any sort of fence to say No to Hewitt, on General Miranda. He would clear anything on his coarse coaching-looking black mare ; he

would half jump, and half bore through, or over, anything; and on his raw five-year old chestnut he would blunder or tumble over anything. "D—l a matter!" as he would say, he somehow contrived his fall should always be, if fall he did, *after* he was *over;* a jovial, hospitable, warm, light-hearted gentlemanly fellow he was, the true characteristic of his countrymen—at least, as I ever found them. I would not describe a man in terms of greater reprobation, in accordance with my ideas, than by saying of him in the terms of the song, "He'll never do for Galway."

As I am not on the subject of characters further than the recollection of the Golden Ball has called some back to memory, we will say a few words on the locality as a hunting country.

A good deal of the pleasantry of a hunting locality depends on taste, and in sooth on nerve, and further, on the state of the pocket; for where, in the moderate provincial county, two good horses will, barring peculiar occurrences, carry a man three days a week, if he cannot keep more, in the (figuratively speaking) metropolitan district of Leicestershire, six would be wanted, or, at all events, used for the same purpose.

The goodness of a country as a hunting one depends greatly on the nature of the game pursued, stag, fox, or hare; that which may be good for the one may in no way suit the other. For stag-hunting, the country about the Golden Ball is a fair one, and presents a good deal of variety of aspect and surface; as a fox-hunting country it is not only bad, but execrable; in fact, taking Berkshire as a whole, and I have hunted in every hunting part of it, it is altogether a bad fox-hunting county; the part of it Warde hunted I should say is the best, as to size of enclosure and distribution of covers. When I

say the Golden Ball part of Berkshire is a fair stag-hunting country, I only mean that, in a general way, it is a fair one for those wanting a gallop, as it gives the deer scope for his powers of speed, and the hounds little hesitation in their pursuit of him, and if the deer is turned out gives a good run, and is taken, or, indeed, if he is not, the stag-hunter is satisfied; but suppose we turn out at the race-course or Tower Hill, and take the deer near Woking, through a long and fast run, to call it hunting is preposterous: if we turn out, say at the Golden Ball, and he takes the enclosures by Bingfield, sticks to them to Warfield, on to Wingfield, and then takes a turn to the left by Shotelsbrook and Waltham, he will give horses something to do in the fencing way, and a good one he must be to live with fox-hounds, and such deer-hounds now are, in pursuit of such game across such a country; usually, however, the hunting in the Berkshire side is more or less heath riding; ugly enough, no doubt, the face of such a country is; still there is a wildness about the riding over it, that gives a sensation of independence of the world, and freedom of action, that can only be felt, not described; but as to hunting, when we annex to it the idea of merely pursuing an animal turned out to be caught again, if we detect ourselves a dozen miles from home, galloping on a half-tired horse, each stride increasing the length of our return, and well knowing the stag being caught and taken is certain, yet at the same time nothing to us whether he is or is not, the heaving sides of our horse will, in such a case, sometimes suggest a doubt of the sense of going further. I can only say, when I have had a long ride home over so uninteresting a country, I have thought myself anything but what was complimentary for not pulling up several miles short of the take. In

fox-hunting the thing is different: we find an animal probably never in the possession of man; our object is the kill as a finale; this is a result of considerable uncertainty; we are interested in the credit and performance of the pack, are anxious they should not be beat by their fox, and feel, independently of other gratification, a wish to see the result of the chase, as we are to hear or see that of a race, for the result is uncertain in both cases. We should have little interest in a race where we knew one horse could beat another to a certainty —it is thus I ever felt with staghounds. I could quit the chase at any moment that suited my pleasure or convenience, with as much indifference as I could a theatre, where, having seen the play, I cared little for the farce or pantomime. If the deer was a wild one, and our means of catching him rendered the chase quite uncertain, be it over heath or enclosure, we should be anxious that he should not escape; but a lengthened chase which, though cold hunting may make slow, but still sure, I hold to be tiresome beyond measure: under such circumstances I should hold him the truest sportsman who first turned his horse's head homewards. If we are compelled to leave foxhounds running, or, though the scent may be bad, still owning their fox, on meeting any one who could tell us the result, our first enquiry, and that made with anxiety, is, "Did you *kill?*" If we leave staghounds, and make any enquiry at all, it is only from a motive of curiosity, and we phlegmatically ask, "Well, where did you take him?" probably congratulating ourselves in not having gone on merely to see certainty made certain.

The locality of the Golden Ball was, however, sometimes enlivened by another circumstance—the arrival of the Old Berkeley from Gerard's Cross; their head quar-

ters were Wokingham, where at the Inn temporary accommodation was prepared for them; the fixtures were in the immediate neighbourhood, and in corroboration of my calling it execrable as a fox-hunting one, the anathemas of Tom and his whips against it were quite sufficient. Tom, at Gerard's Cross and Wokingham, was a different man; he never was in decent temper while at the latter place, where he stayed as short a time as he possibly could; nor did I ever wonder at either circumstance, for where a fox was to be found in some cases, he *could* not in others—they would not get away; and in parts where they could, not a fox was to be found; I can only say I never saw anything like a run in the vicinity, and Tom swore there never had been or would be such a thing. There being no harriers in the neighbourhood, the King's occasionally came over for a day; but the hares in the enclosures ran short as well as the foxes, so they rarely got a day's fair sport; what foxes or hares might have done, had they been constantly well rattled about, I know not.

The nearest established pack of foxhounds was Sir John Cope's, of Bramshill; but even here was no fox-hunting country; the covers were too large, and came too often, to permit such runs as the worthy owner of the pack would have wished to show his friends; and the strong, compact, and judiciously-selected kind of hunter found in his stables spoke at once of the nature of the country, or the greater part of it, that he hunted.

The habits of the deer and fox, when pursued by hounds, are so different, that the causes that may make a country extremely objectionable in the one case may not do so in the other; for instance, where covers are of very frequent recurrence, it is very rare indeed to get a clipping run with a fox; in such places they are

mostly dodging ones; in breaking from one cover their object is the next; and close covers so perplex a pack, with a fox, that they cannot drive him sufficiently to induce him to fly for greater security; independent of which, he is a shy, lonely, and timid animal—concealment is his security; thus, so long as a cover is tenable, a fox, in ordinary cases, will hang there, unless at particular seasons, when, coming from afar, the love of home, or the security he attaches to it, induces him to make for his favourite point.

With the deer it is different; though styled a denizen of the forest—and which, when our country was covered with them, no doubt he was—he is not a denizen of a tangled cover: instinct would tell him, or trial would prove to him, that with his wide-spreading antlers he could scarcely get through such; and though seeking, and found, in the most retired parts of a forest, it was where he could move without impediment. It is true, the *hunting-stag* has his antlers cut off: this does not, however, interfere with instinct, nor has he reflection to make this circumstance influence his actions; he moreover finds his large body and height impeded, where the light and low body of the fox finds, nearer the earth, ample space to get along without impediment; and further, the cover that would effectually conceal him, would not do so by the stag. Instinct, or something else, tells each where its safety or its reverse is to be found, and each acts accordingly. I have seen many a very close race between a whip and a hunted fox, to keep the latter out of a large strong gorse cover; half-a-dozen whips would not drive a deer into one—it would impede, wound, and not conceal him, and he knows it. The usual safety of the fox is concealment; of the stag, flight.

There is another circumstance that renders the running of the hunted stag so different to that of the fox, which is, the latter is generally found where he is at home; he knows the country, all its strongholds, and the most concealed ways of reaching them; with him, a view is a scarce thing: so scent in the hounds, knowing the habits of his game, and quickness of decision on the part of the huntsman, is all we have to trust to, in killing our fox: he, on breaking cover, usually takes his line, has a set purpose and place in view, and perseveres in his determination; casual occurrences sometimes induce him to change it, but he then makes for another point; he knows what he is about, and where he is; so he has still an object in view, though he may change it—a road, lane, common, heath, or any open space has no temptation for pug; he shows as little in or on either as he can, and then for as short a time as possible. Thus, as the line of the fox is nearly always across enclosed country, if those enclosures are small, it generally also unluckily happens in such cases the fences are cramp, blind, and intricate, requiring a careful dot-and-go-one kind of leaping, that puts a horse out of all stride, and takes as long to manage as, with good for flying fences, would see our nag half across the next enclosure; nothing worthy the name of fox-hunting can be had in such a vile rabbit-going country. I know nothing equally tormenting, except a fashionably furnished drawing-room, where, what with tables for work, tables for play, and tables for show, easy and uneasy chairs, *fauteuils à roulettes*, and *fauteuils* that cannot be moved out of the way, foot-stools and hassocks, sofas, couches, *chasses longues*, and ottomans, to thread one's way adroitly, requires lessons from the itinerant charlatan that dances blindfold on a floor strewed with eggs.

The sort of country I have spoken of does not prevent, though at times it may impede, a run with staghounds. When a stag is uncarted he finds himself in a country strange to him in many cases, and in all but little known; for supposing him to have been there before, he has been in his paddock ever since; and though we do sometimes find the same deer take the same line he did before, he only knows the general directions; and though he may make for the same *point*, his course may be a mile wide of his former one; he seeks no enclosures, skirts the covers, sweeps along a green lane or road, and boldly faces not only a common, but a down or heath, where he sees no termination to its limits. So with the stag: if we do occasionally get on or into the chess-board part, if we do not get mated there we get another burst where we can go along. The stag is not, like the fox, to be scared into the enclosures by a cur-dog or sheep-boy if they stand in the way: the hunted angry stag is just as likely to knock them out of his way as to be driven from it by them. So, as showing the difference of the expectation we may have of getting a run with stag or foxhounds in the same country, supposing we turned out a deer or found a fox near the Golden Ball, while we were badgering a dodging fox about the small covers and enclosures between that and Easthamsted Park, we should find ourselves with a stag sailing away over Hertford Bridge flat. Time was when the inn was no bad place for a take and a lunch; but where, if we wanted the same thing in the same style now, we may go without, unless it was supplied by the ghosts of the coachmen of the Regulator or other coaches I have seen so merrily "springing 'em" across the well-known flat. I know they would hail old friends; may those that are living have the means of so

doing, though submitting to the humiliation of S.W.R. on their coat-collars.

That very superior sport is now to be seen with the royal hounds than was the case when the whole *cortége* partook more of royal appearance, there can be no doubt; and that the sharp, short, and decisive run is far to be preferred to the really long journeys that were formerly taken between the turn-out and the take. But the style of running into their game has nothing to do with the style of the hunt as to its appointments; as a royal hunt, the discontinuing the yeoman prickers has taken away much of the distinguishing feature between hounds kept as an appendage to royalty and those of the private gentleman. It may be said that the duty of the prickers in a great measure became uncalled for, when hounds got so fast as to cause the term "slot of the deer" to be all but forgotten. That their assistance might or rather may not be *necessary* we will allow; nor are eight horses to the royal carriage. But if the yeoman pricker with his hundred a year was or is not necessary, neither is a master of the hounds, with Swinley Lodge and two thousand, so far as any benefit to the hunt goes; and I think it cannot be denied that the appearance of half-a-dozen servants of the crown in royal hunting livery did confer more dignity on the turn-out than masters of hounds who never appeared at all. If the *name* of a master of the staghounds is equivalent to such a salary, I cannot but think the *reality* of a yeoman pricker was so to his except, and I say so with submission, that aid to a Minister is of more import than aid to a hunt. If the constant attendance of such a master of the buckhounds as the Marquis Cornwallis was advantageous to the hunt, doubtless there must have been most potent reasons for appointing masters who never

saw a hound during the time they held the office; but these seeming anomalies only show how wonderfully and beautifully constructed is the machinery that keeps up States and keeps in Ministers.

The idea may naturally enough occur, that if, in 1856, we find it necessary to get high-bred foxhounds to be enabled to take a stag in any reasonable time, and that the hunting in 1800 was "road-waggon work," how did our ancestors of two centuries before that time *ever* take a stag? The fact is, that, though we call England the land of the chase, it is only within a comparatively recent period that it has become so. That from time immemorial the stag was sought, pursued, and killed is true; but when men rode horses in the chase little better bred than cart-horses, it must show that keeping up with hounds that could fairly run down a deer would have been impossible; the fact is, they badgered, hooted, and shouted; added to which, every man carried and blew his horn; till the unfortunate animal became bewildered, ran in every direction of the forest, till, blown and tired, he was pulled down by a strong mongrel kind of lurching gazehound: a burst across country was unknown, which causes all old poems or songs of the chase to sing of "Hieing to the *forest*," or "Away to the *woodlands*." The horse that carried the knight at the tournament or chase was the same; and so he well might be, when half his time in the latter case was spent standing still. Let us boast of being fast here as much as we will: the Indian pursuing the buffalo on the plains of America knew what fast work was, long before we did, and was a quick and daring horseman on the plain, fairly running down his game, when our ancestors sat on their chargers like vedettes of heavy cavalry waiting the appearance of theirs in a wood.

The natives of many other countries had horses approaching very near the race-horse both in form and speed, when we—"God save" our "mark!"—had nothing by us well-bred enough for a fast omnibus: one of our late fast coaches would have sewed them up in two journeys.

England, as an Englishman and a sportsman, I feel pride in saying, is *now* verily the land of the chase and the land of all sport, where horses are the means of pursuing it; but it was not always so. I have often heard my father laugh at the hunting he saw eighty years ago, in the royal forests of France. Go back a couple of centuries before that, I doubt if the stag was hunted here in a much more sporting manner, and traps and gins were the modes by which the fox was caught. The fox-hound is comparatively an animal of very recent origin; and if justice is to be done, or honour paid where honour is due, when we see in kennel a pack showing the form and high-breeding fox-hounds now do, or see them racing their fox over a country and kill him in the style they do, we should not omit after dinner giving the name of Hugo Meynell in a bumper, for he first brought the fast style of fox-hunting to perfection, though — listen, my present first flights!—he did sport a pigtail.

THE MENAGERIE:

A TRUE ANECDOTE.

In one of our midland counties stands a town that, but for its boasting a weekly market, could pretend to no higher distinction than that of a large village. Incongruous as it would appear in the eyes of the fashionable inhabitants of Belgrave, or the older aristocracy of Grosvenor Square, or the admixture of both in Park Lane, such towns or villages as the one here alluded to have their classification of distinct grades of society within their precincts, in as full force as in the metropolis wherein the fashionable localities mentioned are situated; and innocent, straight-forward, and kind-hearted as country persons have the credit of generally being, not to throw them quite beyond the pale of fashion and fashionable qualifications, I do from practical cognizance and observation aver that envy, "hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness" do exist among them to quite as great an extent as among the most fashionable of our metropolitan coteries; in fact, to rescue them from any suspicion of primitive want of worldly feelings, I think I may say that all those worldly attributes are even in greater force among the pretenders to high life than they are among the great and high born; for among and in the consideration of

the latter, a private gentleman, a military or naval man, or one of the learned professions, is a man high in dignity of office. Among the truly great there is no distinct line of exclusiveness: any of such possessing a fair character in public estimation, and the manners of a gentleman, has the *entrée* to good society. Next in the catalogue of pretensions comes the trader; here, unless he be some eminent merchant, exclusiveness begins, and indeed ends; for whether he be the proprietor of an *establishment* (name not a shop) in Regent or other fashionable street, or whether he be one who with more sense, and probably with more respectability and responsibility, avows himself the owner of a shop in vulgar St. Martin's Lane, so little distinction is made between the two by persons in high life, that they both come under one head, namely, non-admissibles and non-presentables.

I am aware that such distinction is occasionally thrown aside, where enormous wealth induces the self-interested or adulatory to worship the golden image that fortuitous circumstances, in the absence of Nebuchadnezzar, has set up; but such images are few, and for the sake of the high blood of our aristocracy, we will conclude that such cases of adulation are few also. Such persons doubtless say, and perhaps think, that throwing aside old-fashioned and, as they probably term them, illiberal distinctions shows greatness of mind. I would only suppose a case to such elevated minds: strip their golden calf of his golden appliances, where would be their elevation of mind then?

In a country town or village the theory works differently; here is a host of distinctions that no one but the inhabitants of such places can understand. It is true the number of gentlemen's families residing in country

towns are generally but few; these, with the clergyman, the medical man, and the man of law, form a clique among themselves: this every one can understand; here is a line of demarcation clearly laid down. Then comes a local distinction that would puzzle a Philadelphian lawyer to understand the cause of—Mrs. Barleycorn, the maltster's wife, does not visit Mrs. Print, the linen-draper; Mrs. Print does not hold some perhaps truly-respectable and praiseworthy young woman who makes up the muslin, by the sale of which Mrs. Print lives, as ranking high enough to be on visiting terms with. Mr. Cutaway, the tailor, holds Calfskin, the shoemaker, in contempt, if peradventure the latter wears an apron in his shop. Mr. Cutaway has great respect for Calfskin's wife, a particularly well-conducted person, and the Misses Calfskins, really very fine girls; he is sure Mrs. Cutaway would be happy to ask them to her parties; "but"—but why? This perhaps no one can tell; but perhaps Mr. and Mrs. Cutaway can. This will show that it was not probable the good town of Chatterville was likely to be at all times exempt from certain heartburnings among its inhabitants; but when I add that no inconsiderable number of those consisted of venerable spinsters, with no pursuit to occupy their time and attention save that of investigating all and everything done by their neighbours, it is only surprising that certain little enmities that usually broke out weekly were not diurnal. These virgins, to make certain that nothing should transpire in the town without their cognizance of the fact, and that such facts should have their full quota of comments and discussions thereon, with sundry and various embellishments, additions, or subtractions, as the information and the impressions of the narrator might call for, had established what they termed "little

pleasant *réunions*" at the domiciles of each other, and of those of such friends as patronised these Sisters of Charity (new style). These delightful *réunions*, to avoid expense, and thereby ensure their frequency, were confined rigidly to tea, scandal, penny whist, cake, and a certain wine, or rather beverage, of a nondescript character, but having to a certain degree the gusto and aroma of Madeira. *In vino veritas* is said with much truth of most persons and places; but somehow the only veritable quality of the Madeira consisted in its acidity, a quality that imparted itself to a considerable portion of the conversation where it was imbibed.

Though nothing could be more stringent than the *réunion* rules as to the admission of the monster man, still they so far laid claim to charity as not to render those rules absolutely exclusive of the male sex. The parson, attorney, a rich brewer, and a poor retired General, as he was termed, not only generally but universally, though a company in a veteran battalion was his true grade, were the four favoured by a regular, permitted *entrée* to the fair sisterhood. The worthy parson went, we suppose, because, as he wished to be "in charity with all men," we may conclude he wished to be on the same terms with all women, and further, from thinking it right to occasionally mortify the flesh—a consummation certain to follow the Madeira. The attorney went, hoping he might at some time be required to defend some action for libel or slander. The brewer patronised the réunions because its fair members patronized the smallest of his small beer. The General was too old a soldier not to quarter himself anywhere where he got his ration gratis; moreover, he liked whist, and though the penny points were regulation at the *réunion*, private bets were allowed, and here the General

had a rich harvest in the jolly brewer, who thought himself first-rate as a whist-player, and backed his own judgment like a trump; while every bet made between the two was trumps to the man of war. The ladies were about an average specimen of those of the fair sex who live unblessing and unblessed, and whose ages ranged from about forty to that age when even a hint on the subject would have brought an expulsion of the offender *nem. con.* The only person among the sisterhood differing from the rest was Miss Johns, alias "Old Jack," as she was facetiously styled by the young ladies over whom she presided at Prospect House Establishment for, as the printed terms of Prospect House set forth, the education of the afore-mentioned or any other young ladies. Now, why this place was called Prospect anything, I never could make out, as its sides had no windows at all; its front looked against a blank wall, highly gratifying and exhilirating to the fair prisoners in their leisure moments, and highly proper at the same time; for as there was nothing to see, of course there was nothing improper seen by the young ladies; but, as Miss Johns was wont to remark, the young mind requires a little amusement, to which end a walled-in lugubrious-looking garden, of some thirty yards square, was allotted as a place where the pupils might indulge in healthful exercise and any youthful flight of fancy suggestion might prompt, provided such youthful flight did not exceed the walking by twos on the one walk that went round the sylvan seat. The centre was a bilious-looking piece of grass, called by Miss Johns, *par excellence*, the lawn; here it was a profanation for a young foot to tread, for two reasons—first, because Miss Johns had (as she termed it) the young ladies' "fine things" washed at home, to ensure their being "got up nicely;" and the

lawn was, therefore, appropriated to the bleaching of these articles from a yellow ochre to a Naples yellow hue; the other cause of prohibition of trespass was a really fine mulberry-tree in the centre of this elysium. On this, during the fruit season, the ladies were permitted to feast their eyes; but as to touching even a windfall of the fruit, they would as soon have thought of picking up a hand-grenade, with its fuse lighted.

There was nothing, therefore, in all this to account for the name of "Prospect"—for that, it will be seen, was rather confined; while, on the other hand, the prospect of the young ladies' advancement in education here was so distant, that it was lost sight of by its very remoteness: so we can only conclude that its name was given it by chance, in lieu of "Happy Hall," "Merry Vale," "Cosy Cottage," or any other equally appropriate.

Miss Johns was "fat, fair," so far as the colour of some other person's hair on her head could make her so, and most certainly was, or had been, "forty." I must do her the justice to say she could look the picture of good-humour and liberality; but those who knew her, knew also that, as Norval says of his father, her "only care was to increase her store" as related to herself, but to diminish as far as possible the store for the use of the young ladies. And here again let me pay a tribute of justice. No young lady who had passed twelve months at Prospect House was ever seen to leave it in a state of unladylike obesity: no hen with her brood of chicks was more fussy than was Miss Johns about her brood of young ladies, more watchful, or more indefatigable in all matters appertaining to them, provided such care and watchfulness cost nothing in pecuniary expenditure. Such was Old Jack.

We will now see why the quartette of the male sex

mentioned above, were the chosen of the Lady Patronesses of the Re-unions. The parson was installed from his vocation, which it was considered cast a kind of halo of holiness over and around the assembly. The brewer because his imperturbable good-humour was found (as sugar does in punch) to correct or neutralize the acidity that in the humour of other members would sometimes be detected as predominating too much; and further, he was the most wealthy man in the town. Our attorney had drawn up the regulations of the reunions free of expense, and gratuitously acted as secretary and cashier for the sixpenny fines that were occasionally levied on any departure from the regulations laid down. The General could not be left out, as the word "General" sounded aristocratic. He was, besides, a bachelor; and in the private ear of each fair Reunionist vowed she was the most fair—not that I am authorized in saying any of the ladies absolutely contemplated perpetrating matrimony, but the General's soft speeches and inuendos kept up a little undefinable titillation, tantamount to the gratification some persons feel in having the palm of the hand tickled. Where this little titillation was chiefly felt by the fair spinsters, I am of all men in the world the least capable of conjecturing.

In this state were the re-unions and the town of Chatterville, when an advertisement in the county paper set forth that "a most comfortable family house, comprising dining and drawing-rooms, breakfast room, library, and such-and-such bed rooms, of such-and-such sizes; kitchens, laundry, stabling, coach-house, and numerous out-buildings; excellent garden, pleasure grounds, and so much meadow land" was to let, "on the verge of the romantically-situated and excellent market-town of Chatterville."

A few days after this announcement, a fashionable phaeton and pair, in which were seated a lady and gentleman, with a servant in the dickey behind, were seen passing at a foot's pace down the main street of the town; which, in fact, boasted none other, except a bye-lane or two diverging from it—in one of which Prospect House was situated. As the carriage came opposite to each house, at one or more of its windows a head or heads immediately appeared; the face turning more and more on the oblique as the vehicle got further on, till the ear was brought in contact with the glass, as if to give that organ its share of gratification as well as the rest. In some cases, however, these heads, full faces, and profiles, altogether disappeared from the window, but were immediately seen with their appropriate bodies at the door-ways; and then followed various signs, significant and insignificant, to a friend left to right, *vis-à-vis* to *vis-à-vis*. What these meant to indicate the actors were not all adepts enough in dumb show to clearly evince; but that the strangers were the object, each party fully comprehended.

What created this particular curiosity was, first, the slow pace at which the carriage moved; and secondly, the gentleman looking earnestly from side to side, as if in search of something. This continued till the carriage came opposite the above-mentioned house, where "To Let" apprised the strangers they had found the object of their journey to Chatterville. The lady and gentleman got out, remained some half hour on the premises, resumed their carriage, and at a fair ten miles an hour, left Chatterville; also leaving its inhabitants to make such observations on the circumstance as they might think proper.

We must now, in elucidation of a part of the catas-

trophe that followed, make a few remarks relative to Mr. Parkes (our attorney) and the house to let. This small property had, until the last two years, belonged to a young, high-spirited, extravagant man of fortune, who had occasion to raise a certain sum on it. Now Parkes, to his professed vocation of attorney, *sub rosa*, added that of a money-lender, and had advanced about one-fourth of its value on mortgage. Now Parkes not having, in criminal law phrase, the fear of God before his eyes, or legal fear of the owner of the house either, the first moment he could do so, availed himself of certain documents, and, in default of instant payment of the money advanced, came down on the devoted house, in Macduff's words, "in one fell swoop," by which it will be seen he became possessor of it, with all appurtenances thereunto belonging.

It must be told that Parkes and our jocund brewer hated each other with as decided a hate as could be felt towards anything living or dead. It is true, they met without outbreak—nay, dined with each other repeatedly, and on taking leave parted about on the same terms as we see Peachum and Lockit take leave on the stage. Parkes knew himself to be a contemptible scoundrel, and also knew the brewer held him as such.

Our Brewer had long wanted this house and premises: first, to prevent any unpleasant neighbour occupying it; and, secondly, with a view of adding to his own. But the purchase remained in abeyance, from Parkes having got it at the fourth of its value, but modestly demanding one-fourth more than its real worth.

The day after the appearance of the visitors to the house to let was one of the evenings of the réunions. This took place at the house of the Brewer, who alone took on himself the liberty of departing from réunion

regulations, as he did from any regulation that militated against good-fellowship and hospitality. The lady-patronesses fie-fied against his breach of rules; but vie-vied with each other in consuming the "good" (not the Gods) but the Brewer "provided." It might be supposed that the visit, and the probable results of it, to the house to let, would have been the first subject discussed at the meeting; and so it would have been, had it taken place at the domiciles of any of the fair spinsters; but its not being so here, showed that, strong as was the love of gossip and scandal among the clique, the love of good tea, toast, muffins, cake, and tea-cake was stronger. These having been done ample justice, or (judging by the fearful onslaught) injustice to, when the ball (that is, the ball of conversation) was opened by Miss Candid, a lady who depreciated the absurd practice some persons have of concealing their age: for her part she gloried in hers, in her pretty jocose mode avowing that in ten years "she should be an honest half-hundred." A few malevolent old persons in the town, however, declared they remembered her, exactly this half-century alluded to, then a girl of seven or eight years of age.

"Well, Miss Pliant," said the candid spinster, to one who looked and sat as if the toasting-fork had leaped down her throat in revenge for its extra labour in preparing all toastable things for her especial use—"Well, I do not wonder that Mr. Parks has excused himself to-night, after what he has done. I am sure, ladies, you will all agree with me, we must consider him in future as unworthy of our delightful meetings. My opinion is, that he has no more left the town on business than I have; but only makes this excuse, being ashamed to show his face here: and so indeed he ought to be."

"Now do, Miss Candid," said the good-natured Brewer, "let us hear what Parkes has been doing, to call forth so much displeasure."

"Doing!" half-screamed Miss Candid; "surely you must have heard? — you, who live next door to the house he has to let! Why, I learned all about it the same day it occurred, which was yesterday. You heard that a lady and gentleman had been to see the house, I suppose."

"Why, yes," said the Brewer, "I did hear that much; but it was no business of mine; so I made no inquiry about it."

"It is every person's business to inquire into anything that is likely to effect themselves and their friends," said Miss Candid, bridling-up at the observation and inuendo of Mr. Hopman, the import of which she fully comprehended.

"I am sure," replied our Brewer, "we are much obliged by the disinterested trouble you have taken by your inquiries; but may I ask what is the news in store for us, and how have you alone heard it?"

"The way I got my information was this," said the philanthropic spinster. "So soon as the lady and gentleman drove off, I sent my Susan to inquire all about them, of the woman in care of the house; and the news, as you term it, is of more importance to us all than you may suspect. *The house is let,*" said she, suiting the action to the words and the words to the action, both as emphatically as if she had learned that all our navy had simultaneously gone to Davy's locker.

"Nothing very extraordinary in that," said our jovial Rector. "Parkes advertised it to be let or sold."

"Now, really," joined in Miss Placid, the most good-humoured of the fair Re-unionists, "your manners would

lead one to suppose you considered the house being let as a matter to be regretted. I must say, for my part, I think it would be pleasant to have such agreeable neighbours as the lady and gentleman's appearance bespeaks them as likely to be."

"I am sure," replied Miss Candid, spitefully, "the lady and gentleman would feel highly flattered by your opinion of them, if they heard it; but," added she, exultingly, from feeling she had something in store to annoy those who, knowing her, did not attach much credence or importance to her usual gossip, "what would you say, ladies and gentlemen, to having a whole cargo of live beasts as the agreeable neighbours Miss Placid makes so sure of?"

"Better those," joined in the Rector, laughing heartily, "than worse neighbours: beasts are harmless, at any rate."

"I am surprised," said Miss Candid, piqued beyond measure, "to hear a man of your cloth compare neighbours to beasts."

"Why, really, Miss Candid," replied the imperturbable Rector, "when I consider the conduct of some neighbours, I beg the beasts' pardon."

"Monstrous!" exclaimed the lady; "but I must tell you these are not even common beasts: they are," cried she, at the top of her shrill voice, "they are lions, tigers, *hellephants*, baboons, and—"

At the word "baboons," a loud scream from Miss Johns called the attention of the company to that lady, who threw herself back in her chair, evidently intending to perpetrate a faint, but which was stopped in embryo by a friendly but somewhat forcible shake on the shoulder by Mr. Hopman. "Come, my good lady," said he,

"rouse yourself. What on earth is the matter with you? pray get a tumbler of cold water."

"No, no!" faintly cried Miss Johns, evidently not wishing to make trial of the cold-water cure; "oh, my school, my dear ladies—the bab — bab — baboons!" hysterically sobbed the sensitive mistress of Prospect House.

"Come, come," said Hopman, the dread of the water or some other cause having brought the lady to something like composure, "now let us hear the end of Miss Candid's extraordinary account."

"My extraordinary account, then," said Miss Candid, "is this: I suppose you have all heard of one Wombwell, who takes his wild beasts to the different fairs?"

"And his horrible baboons!" half-sobbed Miss Johns —"oh, my school, my school!"

"I wish you would school yourself into quietness," somewhat gruffly said Hopman. "Well, Miss Candid," said he, addressing that lady, "suppose it is Mr. Wombwell? He can, I believe, very well afford to be a good neighbour. Really, it seems he looks very much like a gentleman, and depend on it, has no idea of bringing his beasts here."

"Or the baboons," quickly put in Miss Johns

"I beg to assure you, Miss Johns, and you, Mr. Hopman, that my information is, I am sorry to say, too certain, more shame to Mr. Parkes. Here they will come" (looking maliciously at Miss Johns), "baboons and all."

A loud groan was all poor Miss Johns' reply to this seeming fact.

"Now, pray do tell us, Miss Candid," said the Rector, "what makes you so certain that it is Mr. Wombwell, or

that he intends favouring us by making this a home for his assemblage of wild animals?"

"My reasons for being certain of both, sir, is *only* that the woman heard him give Parkes his name; and further" (turning to the lady), "he said, 'Here will be plenty of room for the menagerie.' Now, ladies and gentlemen," said Miss Candid, getting up, and making a derisive kind of curtsey, "I hope you are all satisfied."

"Humph!" ejaculated Hopman, "this does look odd, I must say. We must try, Doctor, and stop this, if I find, on seeing Parkes, it is true."

"Why," replied the Rector, "it would not be a pleasant addition to the neighbourhood, I grant; but until we find the animals a nuisance, I fear we can't prevent Parkes letting his premises to whom he likes."

"*Find* them a nuisance, Doctor!" sighed Miss Johns —"why, the very names of those horrid baboons are a nuisance. Are they not very large creatures, sir?"

"Seldom above six feet high," mischievously replied the Rector.

A lengthened groan, with a despairing look, was now Miss Johns' only reply.

"Miss Pliant, your maid is come," said a servant, entering the room.

"Oh, I dare say," said the lady addressed, "my Mary can tell us all about this affair; for I told her to make all the inquiries she could, as she was going to several shops in the town. May I ask her in, Mr. Hopman?"

"Oh, by all means," said the host, "if you wish it."

On Mary making her appearance, her mistress came to the but of the business at once, by asking if it was

known to a certainty that it positively was Mr. Wombwell who had taken Parkes's house?

"Oh, lor, yes, ma'am," replied the *soubrette*, "everybody knows it; and Mr. Cutup, our butcher, says it will make his fortune, as he shall sell all his coarse meat for the beastes what's coming."

Another "humph!" and a stifled sigh from Miss Johns, followed this confirmation of all their worst fears, and the worst fears of all the company, who now simultaneously rose and departed, except the General and three ladies, his partners, who were concluding their game at whist, which occupation had prevented their joining in the evening's discussion.

At the conclusion of the game, Mr. Hopman asked the General if he had heard of the expected arrival of the menagerie?

"Yes, I heard you all talking about it," replied the General.

"Well," said Hopman, "and what do you think of it?"

"Know no regulation against it," said the old soldier, and marched, upright as a halbert, out of the room.

Now our worthy brewer was much more annoyed at the expected wild residents than he chose to allow to any one but himself, and next morning called on Parkes about it.

"Well, Mr. Parkes," said Hopman, on entering the office, "I find you have let your house."

"Yes, I have," said Parkes; "let it for three years certain."

"They tell me you have let it to Wombwell. Now, is that correct?"

"I have let it to Mr. Wombwell, certainly," said Parkes; "and a good tenant he is likely to be."

"But," added Hopman, "I hear he is bringing his menagerie with him."

Parkes gave rather an inquiring look at Hopman, on this remark falling from him, but merely replied by saying, "Mr. Wombwell has a right to bring what he pleases on premises he pays for."

"Yes," replied Hopman; "but it is not neighbourly in you to bring so great a nuisance among us, and particularly to me, living next door."

"I should be sorry," said Parkes, "to in any way occasion annoyance to my neighbours; and particularly to yourself," most blandly added the attorney.

One of Hopman's "humphs" here rather interrupted Parkes's speech; but, on continuing it, he a little maliciously remarked, "You know, my dear sir, I have often offered to sell you the premises. If you had bought them, you could have refused any unpleasant tenant."

Another light seemed here to open on Hopman, who bluntly said, "Are the papers signed between you and Wombwell?"

"Not signed, certainly," said Parkes; "but he has agreed to take them."

"Then," said Hopman, "I buy them, at the price for which you offered them to me."

"Why, you see, my dear sir," said the grasping and wily attorney, "I did offer them to you, as a friend, at less than I hold them to be worth; but we stand on different ground *now*. I have let them at a very handsome rent, for three years; but, to avoid what you say will be a nuisance to you, you shall only pay me three hundred pounds more than the old price, and they shall be yours."

Hopman here gave a most energetic "Humph! I tell you what, Mr. Parkes—I own you have me in a

noose, and you see it. Have the documents ready to-morrow. And now I may, I suppose, consider the premises mine, though, as with Wombwell, the papers are not signed."

"Oh, my dear sir, pray do me the justice to believe I hold you in quite different estimation," smiling a ghastly smile, said the attorney; "the premises shall be yours by noon to-morrow, on my honour."

"Then good evening, sir," said Hopman, stiffly, and rising to go.

"Humph—honour!" said he, as he left the house.

To-morrow came, and Hopman was owner of the premises.

Mr. Parkes, having been made fully aware that his having intended letting the premises to the owner of a menagerie had got him into bad odour with his townsfolk, particularly with the Réunion ladies, and most particularly with Miss Johns, took especial care to let it be known that, finding his having let his house was unpleasant to his valued friends, he had sold it to Mr. Hopman, by which he got reinstated in their favour.

An evening or two after Hopman had become the avowed possessor of Parkes's late premises, was one of the réunions, at which, as on former occasions, was our attorney, when in walked Hopman, accompanied by a stranger. A general rising up and looks of surprise took place on this flagrant infringement of réunion rules. Greater, however, were the dismay and astonishment of the ladies, on Hopman's begging to be allowed to introduce Mr. Wombwell, to whom, he added, he had let the house lately become his.

A look of disgust followed this confession, enlivened by a scream from Miss Johns, from which one might have conceived she had seen one of Wombwell's dreaded

baboons enter the room; but the climax of consternation came to its height when Hopman, walking up to Parkes, said sternly—

"I have brought this gentleman in my hand, sir, to prove you a sneaking scoundrel, unworthy of the notice of these ladies, or any honourable society. You availed yourself of an impression I was under, as well as your neighbours, that we were about to have the annoyance of a menagerie of wild beasts among us. By doing this, you have robbed me of three hundred pounds in the price of the purchase of your premises, well knowing this gentleman was no more the Wombwell we took him for than I am, nor has he more to do with a menagerie."

"Did I say he had?" said the imperturbable attorney. "Take care what you say, sir: words are actionable."

"I shall open the door for you, sir," said the athletic brewer, "and recommend your walking out of it. Is not his conduct such as to deserve this, General?"

"Yes—contrary to regulation," said the old soldier; "turn him out!"

The wary attorney saved that trouble, by sneaking off.

"And now, ladies," said Mr. Wombwell, "allow me to express my regret that a somewhat singular epithet and remark of mine should have occasioned you alarm. The fact is very simple. I married very young; and having a family of no less than nine, I jokingly, to my wife, call them 'my menagerie.' I do remember stating that the premises were well calculated for the menagerie. The person who showed the house heard me say this. I saw she looked surprised, but took no further notice of the circumstance. She reported, it seems, my words; and from them, it seems, all but Mr. Parkes believed me the veritable Wombwell; but I trust, ladies, when you permit me the pleasure of presenting my entire

menagerie to you, you will not think them likely to cause any serious alarm, or, I hope, dislike."

Neither Mr. Wombwell nor his family were disliked, but for several years were the delight of the whole neighbourhood.

THE PRIZE-RING.

"Is it a dagger that I see before me?"—Macbeth.

The advantages that we anticipate from the progress of civilization, or, in modern term, the "march of intellect," are, or at least ought to be, multifarious. We have a right to expect such progress to throw new lights on the ordinary acts and opinions of mankind, and in so doing, to place such objects in a more proper view before us. Supposing this to be the result, if we do not avail ourselves of our newly-acquired distinctive apprehension of what is right or wrong, it would go far to prove that the mind of man is not elevated enough in its attributes to act on proper principle, though the mode of doing so be laid straight before us.

But, worse than this, if it should be found that, rapid as are or have been our steps towards civilization and refinement, yet vice and crime follow with still more rapid strides on our heels, it would seem as if ultra-refinement, the new companion of our journey through life, only accompanied us to beckon on with quickened pace the hideous form of vice, that hitherto only dogged our steps in the far rear.

We will not, however, permit ourselves to think that such is the case. Still candour and precaution must induce us to admit that although refinement, like a man

of highly-polished manners and cultivated mind, must be a delightful companion, we should do well to watch his general acts and the bias of his mind before we admit him as our bosom friend, or abandon ourselves to his guidance.

There is no mind, except it be one appertaining to the very base, but that shrinks from undisguised depravity, low and vulgar ribaldry, or still more from open ordinary crime. It might, therefore, be inferred, that if the base alone tolerated such atrocities, they could in no way be countenanced by the enlightened. This is not, however, a decided *sequitur;* for base is only (in its literal sense) the opposite to *good,* but by no means always the antithesis to *refined.* The antithesis, as relates to refinement, I take to be rude, untaught; or, to go still further, boorishness in mind and manner.

Probably Sir Roger de Coverley would have been held as all but uncouth by the side of George the Fourth, though a refined gentleman among his compeers; but we have no reason to suppose he would have tolerated a vice that would have met reprehension from that monarch. In fact, the reverse of refinement, though it appears in homely and by no means captivating garb, may underneath quite encompass all the true and estimable qualities in man.

That less uncouth habits, and education, do not so much as we might expect or hope to eradicate the evil propensities of mankind, the lamentable and in truth disgusting accounts of crime constantly given in our daily journals too truly prove. In fact, it would almost seem that refinement in the ordinary pursuits of mankind, brings with it refinement (if such a term be applicable) in crime; for certainly rude as may have been our ancestors, crimes have of late years crept in, that

were unheard of a century ago. Some of them are of that atrocious, unnatural, and disgusting nature, that better, I should say, would it be to allow us to suppose such things impossible to civilized man than to expose them. That any ordinary crime, and the infliction of its penalty on the perpetrator, should be made public as a warning to others, no one disputes; but we have had lately brought before us accounts of the commission of crimes of so *particular* a nature, that we can only wish its wretched perpetrator could be privately strangled as a monster unfit to live, and that even his punishment should not be made a public one, by which we are reluctantly obliged to allow *that such things are*. I allude to disgusting cases of incest.

But to speak of other crimes that in point of degradation to the name of man fall far short of those to which I have alluded, never, perhaps, were these latter crimes so rife as at the present moment, and that moment one when we flatter ourselves we have nearly arrived at the height of civilization. These crimes are poisoning, stabbing, and deliberate murder. We must reluctantly allow that murder has been thought by far too lightly of, on the other side of the channel; and the advocates for distributing tracts, instead of food and employment, held the want of mental food as the chief source of such crimes. The solidity of such opinion has not, however, been made quite apparent by what we see in England. We have for some years had tracts enough and teaching enough, but it does not appear that by all this we have even arrived at the very ordinary point of having taught the *eleves* of the new lights to distinguish the very easy distinction between *meum* and *tuum;* or if we have done thus much, we have failed in teaching our pupils to practise what they have learnt. But

worse by far than this—we have not found that refinement has taught those refined to stop at murder in carrying out their cupidity, hatred, or revenge. We heard that the untaught Irish boor murdered the man who drove him from his home, or murdered the one put into possession of it; this, we were told, proceeded from the want of sufficient enlightenment of mind to enable him to see the injustice of his act: perhaps it was so. And it requires no trifling tutelage to teach a man to curb his desire of retaliation where his every feeling for himself and those dear to him has been outraged; but surely it requires no powers of profound reasoning to enable a man to satisfy himself of the heinousness of the crime of committing deliberate murder to get at another's money or a few silver spoons. Still education has failed to do this; for certainly where one murder is committed in untutored Ireland for the sole purpose of pecuniary gain, ten are committed in enlightened England with merely such end in view.

These ideas have suggested themselves from some observations made at a dinner party I was at, opposite the Crystal Palace (then in Hyde Park)—my host, four guests, and myself. The conversation, as is usual at dinners where the host moves in no professional position in society, was general. The new edifice, the elegance of its structure, and the rapidity of its elevation, was brought forward as an instance of the march of intellect, and expansion of the mind of man; and that military and civil force being necessary, the very disposal of the soldiery, and the perfect organization of so enormous a body of police, was further elucidation of the subject.

"May I ask," said I, addressing the speaker, "which corollary are we to take as proof of the perfection we

have arrived at—the disposal of this immense force, or the necessity of having them?"

At this he turned towards me, thus giving me the advantage of seeing as much of his really very handsome face as could be seen in the interstices between a very fine Polish beard and a pair of veritable Austrian moustaches.

"Both show perfection of idea," said he: "first, the edifice; and secondly, the keeping strict order by proper arrangement. I hear that nothing like boxing or a blow was given."

"Probably not," said I; "but I did hear that a policeman was stabbed by a butcher's knife."

"*Cela ce peut*," said he, with a perfect Parisian elevation of the shoulders, and sipping his wine, "that is better than being beaten to death with a fist: there is another step we have gained in civilization—the brutalizing exhibition of the prize-ring is nearly done away with!"

I saw our host cast a furtive glance at me on this being said, perhaps expecting a little wordy sparring from me; but gentlemen who are occasionally honoured by the notice of royalty, are not to be sparred with by authors of very minor pretensions; so my reply and a glass of claret went the same way.

The next day, with only my books around me, and some daubs of my own on the walls, I felt I was among friends; so I sat down to consider as to how far the old habits and predilections of Englishmen were, as my host designated them, brutalizing.

If I take the term brutalizing in its proper sense, it means the bringing a man in habits and mind on a level with the brute creation. It is, however, an inappropriate term; for when we designate a man a brute, we

usually mean to personify or depict a being of a savage and ruthless disposition. In this we very improperly vilify the brute creation; for take the generality of them, they are anything but this; and to alter the term, if men partook more of the disposition of quadrupeds than they do, it would be better for them and those about them. My dog will suffer deprivation, and face danger of any sort, to follow me or obey my wish: yet, in sooth, among acquaintances—as extensive as perhaps any man can boast of—I have never yet found one disposed to do thus much. My horse welcomes my approach in the only tones he knows how to utter. It may be said that is because I have fed him—granted; but in truth I have fed those of my own species when they wanted it, on whose welcome I should now place small reliance. Having written so much as I have on sporting subjects, I have been told I am a good judge of certain animals. This may or may not be the case—I never boasted that I was or am so; but this I do say—I am a pretty good judge of man; and feeling that I am so, I say but little on the subject.

The pugilistic ring brutalizes mankind; so says, or said, my host. We have it not, however, on record that it led to the use of the butcher's knife, or any knife—a trifling *contretems* that he seemed to think a little casualty scarcely worth notice. Possibly he thought that being slayed thus, lamb fashion, by the butcher, was a very easy way of making an exit from the world. It may be held so in Madrid, Lisbon, and Venice; but those who have been *brutalized* by seeing a fair British encounter between Englishmen, hold it in quite another point of view, and consider that assassination borders very closely on brutalizing those who cowardly assail an unprepared victim. The indigenous love of fair play, and

meeting man to man, may be very John Bullish, I admit; but it was a feeling and habit that made Bull respected by his friends, and not quite held as one to be trifled with by his enemies, though he did not always assume the grizzly appendage of the bear to his countenance, that carries with it no proof of additional bravery on the part of the wearer. No; whether in self-defence, in the prize-ring, or in the field of battle, John trusted to a strong arm and a stout heart—asked but for a clear field, and then asked for no favour. These are the lessons he got in the *brutalizing* prize-ring—these lessons taught him (and many are the instances where he put them in practice) if he saw a wounded and prostrate enemy in his power, instead of bayonetting him on the spot, to render, if possible, his position less agonizing ere he passed on. Such conduct and such feeling is truly British: refine as we may, we cannot improve on it.

Some one of the new school may ask, would such a ruffian as Tom Crib the fighter have thus acted? Ay, on my life he would, and have been one of the first men in the world to have done so; and if he had time and opportunity, would have carried such a helpless wounded far on his back, placed him in his tent, and ministered to his wants with all the kind and good feeling of a woman. Such was Tom Crib the prize-fighter!

Let us look a little to the origin of pugilistic encounter: we do not find it originated with the most barbarous nations, but, on the contrary, with the most refined. Barbarous, comparatively speaking, such nations were at that time—at least, so they would be thought in the estimation of persons of the present day; but they were the most refined of their time, which shows that then, as of later ages, the boxing-ring and pugilism was most

patronised where the people were the most refined. In fact, I believe I am correct in saying such encounter is not, or ever has been, a feature in the pursuits of barbarous tribes. These, like the brute creation, fight on the impulse of the moment, or when actuated by jealousy, hatred, fear, or desire of rapine. I do not, however, recollect to have read any account of their entering into contest with each other, either for prizes or a desire to put to proof their skill, strength, or stamina in manly encounter with each other. We are told that among such tribes no man is considered, or allowed to consider himself, a warrior, till he can exhibit the scalp or scalps of enemies as trophies of his prowess. So far there is a desire for honorary consideration exhibited; but I believe the mode in which, or by which, he possessed himself of such trophies is not investigated; and if he could surprise a sleeping foe, the possession of the scalp is alone an admitted proof of his pretensions to be enrolled among the warriors of his tribe; nay, the cunning or stealthy tread that could surprise an enemy, is held as one of the attributes of a warrior the most to be lauded and admired. Fair play holds no place in the system of Indian warfare, or now in Russian.

Now though the gladiators and athletæ of old certainly did contend for prizes, and some, I believe, were regularly engaged and paid as public exhibitors—even these contended in honourable struggle, and felt the mortification of defeat, though contending with no hostile feeling of dislike or revenge towards each other; and at such exhibitions there were others who contended from emulation only, and whose reward was merely some honorary badge or token, of no value in a pecuniary point of view. It is true their conflicts were terrific; but they were carried on under rules of honour and fairness, that neither

combatant dare infringe. It is also true death was the frequent result of such deadly encounter; but it was death dealt with fairness, and the same hand that gave the blow would have scorned the insidious thrust of the cowardly assassin. "A clear stage and no favour," was the bold and honourable principle and wish of the noble Romans; and "may the best man win," the further principle they acted on. These honourable aspirations also came from manly hearts in the prize-ring, where manly and honourable encounter was encouraged, and manly conduct met its reward. The twaddle of would-be saints, now so fashionably rife among us, may designate the old and hardy contests indigenous to our soil as barbarous, if they please: they may promulgate arguments against it, and have done, till the laws have stopped, or at least tried to stop them altogether. This may be done, till, from the force of habit, man shall fear to meet his fellow-man in fair encounter. Englishmen, at least Englishmen of that class, that as soldiers have shown the tough materials they are made of, have habits purely English; they are accustomed to draw their swords only on their enemies, nor are they disposed to use the bayonet for other purposes; neither, like the Dutch, will they fight each other with their knives. Such are resources it has ever been the glory of Englishmen to hold as unnecessary in ordinary encounter with each other. Habit has taught them to use only the weapons nature gave them. Well could they use them, and by their use they learned to fear no fellow-man. Do away with the bulldog courage of an Englishman, you spoil him at once. Do away with it, and see if the saints who talked it down can preach it up again. While feelings of chivalrous honour exist in the breast of any man—no matter be he peer or pugilist—those feelings will ever deter him from prac

tising that which is despicable. It is quite true that acting on the principle of honour is not quite definite as regards the opinions of individuals. I should say that acting honourably may be described in a man's acting with honour where honour alone was his incentive to do so. As a case in point, a tradesman holds that man as one of honour that pays his bill. Now, to speak personally, I do pay my bills when I can—not upon any principle of particular honour, but simply because I do not like to be worried, and am too proud, as well as too poor, to solicit favour from butcher or baker. But as allusive to friends or acquaintances, I certainly am never impertinent enough to inquire whether either regularly pay their tinkers and tailors. This is a matter between tinker, tailor, and customer, with which I have nothing to do. I hold honour to have not much to do in either such transactions; in fact, there is no honour in the case —the tradesman trusts because he knows the laws very properly give him a hold on his creditor: the debtor takes credit knowing the usual consequences if he does not *pay*. Now there is no honour in this, *unless* the creditor could not avail himself of the law, and trusted to the honour of his debtor. If so unmitigated a scoundrel could be found (yet, by-the-bye, I dare say such could readily be produced), as one who would take property he had no intention or chance of paying for, all our penal laws fall short of punishment adequate to such premeditated villany. But as it is, it is only whether the honourable or dishonourable Mr. A. B., in getting the patty-pans and paletots of Messrs. C. D., or Messrs. C. D., in delivering the said A. B. over to Messrs. J. D. and R. R., alias John Doe and Richard Roe, have the best of the fight. It is, in short, a fight between them (fair or not), and no favour. Now as I in no way pretend (though

many do) to be a whit better or honester than my neighbours, I have a mortal aversion to having my honour trusted to; it puts me, as Jonathan says, "in a fix." Give me the choice of doing or leaving undone a given thing, with the alternative of a trip to New South Wales, I am your humble servant. It is then only whether I choose to experimentalize a penal settlement abroad, or remain in one at home, that has for some time been quite penal enough to me. In doing this I should compound no reliance on my honour, or, perhaps, much luxury either.

There are few so truly debased as not to be influenced by an appeal to their honour. The lowest criminal often refuses pardon, if the conditions are the betrayal of his comrades in crime. Perhaps this feeling is the solitary bright spot in the dark waste of his depraved mind. Still it is something; it shows the mind not to be so totally callous as not to be touched on some point. Do away with this, he becomes a fiend at once.

What supports the elevated character of the gentleman? Not education alone; but the results of education and the association with the educated: one of these results is a high sense of honour in transactions, where honour is the only guarantee. Whence arises the term "a debt of honour?" It is because it is a debt where honour only was trusted to. This made many men pay such, though they might not pay the debt of the tradesman; though candour must make us admit that the latter is in many cases the honester one; but against this, the trading creditor is supported by the laws—the other, in many cases, only by the laws of honour. Thus it will be seen, that among the highest, down to the lowest, honour is a watchword that in its different ways is the strongest appeal we can make to man. What honour is,

may be, and often is, misinterpreted; but every man is alive to what he considers honour to be.

We will now turn to a class that is neither the highest nor lowest, the most virtuous nor depraved. We will say a man of a given grade in society enters the army as a private soldier. The Frenchman is a brave soldier. Why is he so? He feels his honour called on by *La belle France;* his vanity also makes him hold her a part and parcel of himself; besides this, he prides himself on being one of a military nation, and feels that, as a soldier, he is bound to support a character that he considers elevates him; he is actuated by honour, and well in the field does it actuate him.

John Bull becomes a soldier. He likes his country well enough too: not from any chivalrous love of country, for he has little of the "chivalrous" about him; but as he gets better beef-steaks, bacon, and porter, and ale, in it than in any other, he holds it the best to live in. He acts the part of a brave soldier, but from a different incentive to that of the Frenchman. John has no pride in being a soldier, or pride in proving his nation a military one; he has no emulation to be thought to excel in military tactics; he is as averse to being driven back as the Frenchman is, but from a different cause. The latter is mortified lest it may tarnish his honour as a soldier—John, lest it might induce a doubt of his prowess as a man. The Frenchman cannot brook ceding to John, lest it might show him the better soldier. John cannot bear a repulse from Monsieur, lest it might shake an opinion he considers to be that of all others as well as himself, namely, that, to use his own term—"One Englishman can 'lick' three Frenchmen whenever they meet them." Doubtless, as man to man, and with their fists only to trust to, he could do so, and probably, as Bobadil says,

"twenty more" — that is, one after the other. The English soldier fights bravely because he is naturally a brave hardy fellow, with indomitable bulldog courage, that will take no denial if he can help it; and that further, as a man, he fears no other, and hand-to-hand and foot-to-foot will yield to no other, unless nature itself gives way. Monsieur is alive to the honours of the soldier —John Bull to that of the man. Thus honour governs both; but do away with that feeling, and neither would long be worthy the name of men.

I have alluded to the numerous stabbings, poisonings, murders, and other crimes grown, we must regret to allow, so common among us. Within the time I began this paper, and this moment, are three instances—one policeman has been stabbed with a knife; another has had his brains literally smashed by clinkers (a kind of brickbat); lately, one in my presence was seriously injured from a blow given under the concealment of an angle in the wall. None of these cowardly atrocities would have been committed by any man or men who held the love of fair-play as a necessary attribute to one aspiring to the character of "a man." I do not go so far as to say that decrying pugilism and the prize-ring has brought on this laxity of fair, honourable, and manly feeling now so conspicuous; but I do say that calling that barbarous and disgraceful that among the lower orders fostered honourable and fair conduct, will go, if it has not already gone, a long way in producing the results we have seen. Men will have some mode of avenging their wrongs, vindicating their rights, indulging their emulation, and showing their superiority. The prize-ring was the rallying point of Englishmen to effect this; if they are therefore brought to think that a fair and manly encounter, man to man, so far from being an honourable mode of doing this, is

a disgraceful one, the murderous knife will be resorted to take life, when simply a thrashing formerly quite satisfied a man for any grievance he felt he had endured from another.

The twaddle of "the brutality of two men standing up in cool blood and beating each other to pieces," which is about the phrase of the usual cant, is nonsense: it is certainly an encounter that is seldom carried on without hard blows on both sides, but it must be recollected it is not a mere "hammer and tongs" meeting, the result depending on which man can bear the most beating; but a trial of skill also, as to which man can stop the most intended compliments of this sort. It must be further borne in mind, that pugilists are men accustomed to hardihood: their frames become, as compared with those of other men, as steel is to wood; so the blow that would half annihilate a mechanic, soft and sickly from sedentary employ, falls innocuous on the man prepared to receive it; and that which only produces short temporary confinement and suffering to the pugilist in high training, would be death to a man of usual habits and living in an ordinary way. Some reader may say it is easy for me to make light of the sufferings of a beaten man. If he does so, I beg to assure him I do not speak, as it is termed, "without my host;" for I am free to confess, that, in return for a certain degree of arrogance on my part, and a rather undue appreciation of my own pretensions, I have endured two or three as sound thrashings as perhaps ever fell to the lot of any unprofessional individual.

I in no shape attempt to deny that the practices of the prize-ring became quite abominable, and, like the Augean Stables, required much purification; so did racing, from precisely the same cause, when the ever-to-

be-lamented Lord George Bentinck, like another Hercules, took the work in hand: well he did it, and the turf now feels the benefit of his interference: it only wants some one to go on with the meritorious work. The prize-ring wants its Lord George—not to discountenance pugilists, but to hang, if the laws permitted, those who brought it to a means of robbery, instead of a manly exhibition.

The monument lately put up in memory of Tom Crib shows how the English nation estimate a brave man. The outcry lately made against pugilism was felt materially to affect the subscriptions to this work. Had such a design been contemplated when George the Fourth felt pride in showing foreign crowned heads the materials of which Englishmen were made of, thousands would have opened their purse-strings as followers of Royal bounty; nor would it have been held any disparagement to Royalty to countenance a well-earned compliment to a faithful subject and a brave man. Thousands have been and will again be lavished on testimonials to men who have not quitted or will quit the world, leaving as vivid recollections of their charities and kindly feelings, as did the humble Tom Crib, the pugilist: these proceeded from feelings soft as woman's, though, when brought in honourable contact with man, his indomitable courage proved that the Lion supporting the urn, is an appropriate emblem of the true heart of him whose ashes this urn is, in sculptured representation, supposed to contain.

Let us hope, therefore, that some influential denizen of our country will, with a heart truly British, have the moral courage to set pretensions to and manifestations of mistaken and maudlin sanctity at naught, and under proper auspices and proper modifications and regulations, revive a manly spirit among us—a spirit that produced a

bearing in a Briton that other nations—nay, even our enemies—had liberality enough to appreciate and candour enough to praise. Then again, will our countrymen hold it the contemptible act of the coward to take the unarmed or unsuspecting at disadvantage; and then over the social glass of English productions shall this toast be circulated—"Palsied be the hand that holds the fatal drug, or coward's knife, to injure a fellow-man."

IMPERTURBABLE JACK.

"I THOUGHT we had settled that, last night, my dear," said Mr. Meredith, using the muffineer at the same time to the eighth part of a muffin on his plate.

"Settled! settled what?" replied his lady, with unfeigned astonishment.

"Why, about this—pass me the sardines, will you, love? thank you—why about this party."

"I certainly did hear you make some objections to it, which I, of course, did not suppose you contemplated my attending to," replied Mrs. Meredith. "I suppose, sir, you allow that parties come within the province of the lady, and not the gentleman; and I assure you I am not disposed to resign the privilege."

"Excellent tongue," said the imperturbable husband; "is it Fortnum and Mason's?"

"Really!" replied the lady, with as much bitter sarcasm as she could throw into her really beautiful features, "I am not conversant with the names of all the tradespeople who supply the house."

"I doubt not but Webster can enlighten you on the subject."

"I do not think it quite impossible but the tradespeople may enlighten me themselves, unless I take—another cup of tea, love—some decisive steps to alter our present arrangements as to expenditure."

"I have not heard, Mr. Meredith, that your friends consider those arrangements in bad taste."

"I am infinitely obliged to them," said Mr. Meredith, bowing.

"Then while it is so, Mr. Meredith, what alteration is necessary, may I ask?" said his lady.

"Only some that I intend making, love," replied Meredith.

"Not without my consent, if you please, sir," with much asperity replied Mrs. Meredith. "What do you want?" she added, seeing Meredith point, without speaking, to something on the breakfast table. "Any more tongue?"

"Not this morning, love, thank you," said Meredith, smiling almost imperceptibly. "I should be glad of a little sugar, if you please."

Had any one seen the manner in which the lady passed the sugar to her liege lord, they would scarcely have required to be told that the honeymoon had passed with Mr. and Mrs. Meredith; in fact, they had been married near twelve months.

I must now, however, beg their and my reader's pardon, if I leave the pair to conclude their matutinal meal without further observation; for I find myself in about the same predicament as one who, after having got half-a-mile from the hall-door, recollects he has left his handkerchief, or purse, or some necessary accompaniment of his day's peregrination behind him. In such a case he may grumble if he pleases, but it will avail him nothing; the only sensible thing to do is to complacently walk back, and that not merely to the hall-door, but to the place where the missing article is to be found; and, figuratively speaking, so must I.

I have introduced my reader to my hero and heroine

at an hour when, in a general way, only the most intimate friends are admitted, and have been *gauche* enough to have done so without even making him cognizant of any particulars relative to either. This, however, must be done to prevent the story being *matiere embrouillé* altogether; and, further, I must be guilty of the very uncourteous proceeding of giving precedence to the gentleman.

I have hitherto mentioned my hero as Mr. Meredith; but those who had the advantage of knowing him intimately would no more recognize him by such epithet than they would Anacreon Moore, if we called him Lord Ellenborough. That our poet had more natural talent and wit, I believe to be indisputable; that he had as much common sense, I think quite probable; and saying that he was more universally beloved by his fellow-men, is but paying a poor compliment to one whose feelings were as warm as the others were imperturbable.

Mr. Meredith and John Meredith, Esq., were epithets by which my hero was known by his tradespeople and inferiors; by the first of whom he was respected, and by the last beloved; but among his chosen few he was Jack Meredith; and, indeed, with them the surname was uncalled for—Jack sufficed.

I think, if any one will turn to his memory's list of acquaintance, he will find that where any is addressed by his surname only, and that abbreviated by him, he is one that ranks high in his estimation, as far as regards the attributes of his heart; it carries conviction that he is a favourite—is one of the best samples of the class in that society to which he belongs; and this holds equally good, be that class of the higher or lower order. I do not mean that it follows, Tom, Frank, Fred, or Jack, is to be held as an estimable character, or, perhaps, take

him, all in all, even a respectable man; but such terms show he is of the best of his class; his respectability must, therefore, be judged of by that of his associates.

Meredith, the hero of this tale, memoir, or reminiscence, whatever term the reader may hold as most appropriate, at the age of twenty-one came into possession of an unencumbered property of three thousand a-year. From youth Jack was a character; there was scarcely a sickly, destitute, or ill-used boy in the village, whose case had not been ameliorated by Jack's advocacy and purse; and but few of the blustering and ill-disposed that he had not soundly thrashed. He was sent to a first-class school till he was sixteen; here his perfectly good-humour imperturbable coolness, determined courage, and generosity where the contents of his purse were called for, had rendered him a paramount favourite. From this he returned home to be put under a domestic tutor. The first specimen that Jack gave his tutor that he had a character to deal with was, by his expressed determination to cut all classic authors. The astonishment of the worthy pedagogue, himself a high churchman and profound classic scholar, may be imagined. Had he heard it indicated that divine service was no longer to take place in our churches, he would have held such a proposition as little less monstrous than Jack's declaration. Drawing himself up in his seat to his greatest height, to throw all the dignity he could into his appearance, he said, in most measured phrases, "As I consider, Mr. Meredith, you have only thought fit to hazard a joke on a subject I hold to be of too much importance for such purpose, we will go on with the last authors you read at Harrow."

"You have heard my determination," coolly replied Jack.

"Do you mean this?" asked the astounded tutor.

"Positively," said Jack.

"You will not read then?" rejoined the master.

"Not a line," announced the imperturbable pupil.

And on preparing to rise from his chair, whether the Dominie had been accustomed to deal with boys, instead of an athletic youth turned sixteen, or whether he had met with more yielding dispositions than Jack's, I know not; but, on the latter attempting to rise, the indignant pedagogue, placing a hand on Jack's breast, caused him to fall back in his seat. If the man of learning had made the most of his own height while in a sitting posture, Jack, now rising slowly from his chair, showed an honest five feet nine inches, and a countenance on which cool determination and absence of all hastiness of temper was legibly written.

"You have done," says Jack, without raising his voice, "what no man living but my father should have done without retribution on my part, except yourself, as his friend. Respect for that father has stayed my hand in your case; but beware of a repetition of a similar affront; put a finger again on my person, and you will probably find your own in a state you might find unpleasant." Jack then left the room, and in his manly, straightforward way recounted the whole business to his father.

After this *duvale* between pupil and tutor, of course his remaining in the family was out of the question; so Jack got rid of tutor and classics from that day. The father was, of course, annoyed by the circumstance; but Jack set the matter at rest in the same unusual way he did most things. He was an affectionate and dutiful son, and, though he rebelled against his father's friend, would not have given his father an hour's real uneasiness for any earthly consideration.

A son dictating what his education should be, to a father, may seem somewhat extraordinary; but Jack was an extraordinary fellow, and his father knew it. He was not, therefore, surprised when the same day, in reply to some observations, Jack came to the point at once, in the following rather laconic expression of his motives as regarded his conduct to his tutor.

"I assure you, my dear father, what I have done did not arise from any want of respect to you, or wish to be idle on my part. If you wish me to return to Harrow, it will be my duty to obey, and I must then, of course, follow the studies thought fit and proper there; but, as I believe you neither intend me to be a pedagogue nor a parson, I am satisfied I know as much of the classics as are necessary for a gentleman, and learning more is only wasting time that I can employ better on attention to other accomplishments. Have confidence in me, and you shall find I will not deceive you when I promise to study as hard as you could wish."

Jack kept his word; and though he hunted, shot, coursed, and was the *primum mobile* of everything going on in the neighbourhood in the shape of frolic and fun, he also made himself the refined and well-educated gentleman; he was not one to do things by halves. He wished to see foreign manners and other countries. He did so, and returned the finished gentleman. His peculiar character as to most perfect coolness and determination, where he felt he was right, never left him; but in warmth of heart and enthusiasm of soul, Jack had all a woman's feeling.

In proof of the former attributes of mind and temperament, at a party given in Paris, Jack having received a most rude affront from an Englishman there, was too much a man of the world and good breeding, to cause a

démêlé in a large assemblage, by taking up the matter at the moment. The circumstance had been noticed, but by the few among the parties when it occurred. It happened that Jack's antagonist was requested to sing; he volunteered a duet, if some one could be found to join him. Unfortunately, Jack was known as one acquainted with the part; so he was requested by the hostess to join. Without a moment's hesitation he agreed to do so; and, to the astonishment of the offender, and those who had witnessed the affront, Jack, in an ordinary courteous way, joined in the duet. "Was it possible," exclaimed some, "that a gentleman and an Englishman, could pass over so gross an affront without notice?" But such appeared the fact, and their estimation of Jack's courage sank below zero. They little knew him; neither time nor circumstances could turn him from his fixed determination to wipe off the insult; as well might a man expect to stay the course of the wind or the sun as to anticipate Jack's relaxing one iota in his course. At an hour long before such a visit was anticipated, a friend of Jack's waited on the offending party; he had selected for the occasion a son of the Emerald Isle, and one who would be much more likely to shoot his friend than compromise that friend's honour. Fortunately, perhaps, for both parties, a military command had ordered the aggressor to a distant province, and he was obliged to leave Paris in half-an-hour after our Hibernian friend had waited on him. On being informed of his antagonist's destination, Jack most coolly said, "That will just suit my book to a letter; I intend going there in three or four weeks." In the three weeks there Jack went. He lost no time. He had not been in town an hour before he had found out the quarters, or rather late quarters of his intended

vis à vis; he had been ordered to the West Indies, where he would, probably, remain some years. "Years hence, or now," replied Jack; "out he comes. I can wait the gentleman's convenience;" and so he would have done, and met him with the same coolness twenty years afterwards as then.

Persons not conversant with such matters might be induced to hold this as unjustifiable, and consider it as evincing an unforgiving tendency of heart in our hero; no such attribute, however, belonged to Jack's heart. If even injured, a word of contrition on the part of the offending party, and Jack would take the proffered hand in all the warmth of unreserved friendship. It was with no feeling of animosity to the man that Jack so sought him; but he had received what men of honour consider an insult. That insult it was necessary should be apologised for, or its penalty paid. Time might do away with any angry feelings, as relative to the affair; but ages could not recall the act, and there remained but the two courses mentioned to wipe off the affront; and this, as the world is constituted, a man ranking as a gentleman must do.

Jack had not, however, so long to wait for this as he had reason to anticipate, for his adversary's regiment was ordered home. Jack was not long in waiting, or rather causing his Hibernian friend to wait on the sub, who had not finished his breakfast, the morning after arriving at his quarters, before he fully understood that an apology or a meeting was unavoidable.

"Well," says Jack, on his friend's return, "how stands your mission, sir knight?"

"The young gentleman will accommodate you to-morrow morning at six."

"Then so will you," replied Jack, "if you will be with me at five."

"With all the pleasure in life will I," cries Connor.

The next morning "true to the touch," the combatants were on the ground. The young sub's second, a staid old half-pay major, had, with that proper feeling that should actuate every second, made himself master of the whole affair; and, finding his principal wholly in the wrong, and that an apology had not been demanded in any threatening or ungentlemanly way, had persuaded his young friend to make one.

Advancing to Jack's second, "Mr. Connor," said he, "my young friend is sensible he has been much to blame. He commissions me to express his regret, and offer an apology, and solicit your principal's hand in reconciliation; will you be pleased to make this known to him?"

"With all the pleasure in life," cries Connor.

On his doing so, Jack advanced to the young sub. "I have only one request to make, sir," said Jack, smiling, "and I trust you will see the justness and necessity of it. The little unpleasantry, that we shall not again name, took place in the presence of several who know both of us. I shall rely on your honour they are made acquainted with the termination of the affair."

"By that honour they shall," replied the sub.

Jack's hand was extended the next moment, and they were ever firm friends till the death of the young officer terminated their friendship.

I do not mean to infer that the following circumstance had anything to do with preventing the young man ever again permitting his temper to get the better of him, but it occurred.

Returning homewards, the young officer and Connor were walking together. "'Faith," says Connor, "it's

anything but pleasant being second to a man when we are sure how the thing will end; it's not pleasant to see a man shot, and mighty inconvanient to be obliged to lave one's country in consequence of it."

"You seem," said the other, "to make quite certain as to what the result would have been."

"No doubt of it in life," replied Connor.

"Yet," says the sub., "we often hear of dead shots missing their man."

"Do they?" replied Connor; "but d——l a ghost of a chance of that with him; he would hold his pistol just as steady with a regiment before him, as he would if he fired at a sack of potatoes."

The young officer burst out into such an immoderate laugh at Connor's Irishism, that the others stopped to share in the joke.

"Oh! it's nothing in life worth telling," said Connor; "but I say, Jack, we have had many a bet together. I'll bet you a dinner for us four you don't hit that young ash at twelve paces."

"Done," says Jack.

The ground was measured. Jack slowly raised his pistol, brought it to a level, and hit the stem of the tree within an inch of the centre; it was measured, and found to be six inches and a quarter diameter. The young sub., with much gravity, took off his hat to Jack; but all were too well bred to make further remark. The affair, however, gave rise to a friendship between the two young men that ceased only on the death of the young officer, which occurred some years after the above event.

There is a saying that "a single man is never broke till his neck's broken." The saying, of course, means irrevocably placed *hors de combat*. This may be taken as a kind of most ungallant insinuation that, when the bachelor

becomes a married man, the chance of being broke is not so remote as before. 'Tis true that in marrying he sets not, like Richard, his "life upon a cast;" but he certainly does his comfort, and, being married, he must "stand the hazard of the die;" but in this a vast deal depends on the animus of the Benedict; for, supposing the alliance to be unfortunate, some men would make themselves truly wretched; others become savage, and make the lady wretched; while a wiser or more strongly minded man holds the *mésalliance*, not as an absolute cause for misery and despair, but merely an absence of anticipated bliss; and this bliss being one that in all its bearings he never experienced as a single man, finding he cannot obtain it in a married one, like a sensible fellow, he determines to make himself comfortable without it. The weak-minded man allows the lady to torment him, or make him miserable. Now, in such a dilemma, I think I should say, "My sweet one," patting her on the cheek, but taking care she did not get a snap at my fingers. "Sweet, indeed!" would possibly reply the fair one, with a look as if she had intended what I prudently guarded against. "Well then, dearest," I should say, "I have made up my mind, and will now afford you the benefit of knowing my determination. I married you, hoping it would render us both happy. I have tried to render you so, but you won't be happy. You have never tried to render me so; so I can't be—that is, not through you; therefore, just depend on this, as you won't make me happy, confound me if you shall make me miserable."

Our friend Jack's imperturbable coolness was destined to be put to a stronger test than it had yet met with: he fell in love. It might be thought, from his character, that he would have set about this with something of his

usual coolness; but no; as a pretty face overturned all the rules of an Eastern court, so it overturned all poor Jack's imperturbability "at one fell swoop;" he was not only in love with the person of the lady, but from her being (in his term the unsophisticated) daughter of a country gentleman of very limited income, he maintained that her husbanding his fortune would be more than equivalent to having one of her own, if brought up with expensive habits and ideas. The only difference that could arise between them, he held to be, the delightful and fond one of his urging the sweet girl to mix more in society, and indulge herself in greater expenses than she seemed inclined to do, fondly holding him a world to her. Poor Jack's unsophistication might be a very pretty plant while kept in a cottage, but it is astonishing the effect transplanting had on it.

The morning dawned that in Jack's estimation was to put him in possession of all of earthly felicity. As we are not perpetrating or contemplating a novel, but a characteristic sketch of part of the history of a very singular fellow, I must not dilate on the bright visions that flitted o'er his mind in dreams of blissful import. Young ladies will at once decide on what those dreams ought to have been; but as I never heard whether or no he dreamt at all, I must leave the matter to the imagination of those conversant with such affairs of the heart.

According to established custom, the marriage ceremony over, the lady blessing and the gentleman blessed, returned to the paternal home to breakfast. Far be it from me to judge how palpitated the heart of the fair one during the ceremony that imposed on her the duties of a bride: though for so unsophisticated a young lady she evinced a fortitude beyond expectation—that is the expectation of those who fancy they will find more

shrinking timidity in the inhabitant of a cottage than the denizen of parks and mansions; nor did the somewhat furtive glances of the married and unmarried present at the breakfast table, in any shape disturb the perfect coolness and nonchalance with which the new-made bride discussed the good things before her. This poor Jack set down to a charming absence of all affectation—a conviction that rendered her, before thought charming, doubly becharmed in his eyes.

The really liberal and good taste shown in the arrangement of the *déjeûné* satisfied the enraptured bridegroom that where intuitive refinement of taste existed, the being accustomed to give entertainment where refinement is quite as indispensable as display, was quite unnecessary; and further, that his lady-love at the head of his establishment would be as much at home as if he had chosen her from among the daughters of the heads of the aristocracy. Oh! how delightful he thought it would be to indulge the fair child of innocence and simplicity in all her simple wishes, while she affectionately and timidly chid him for any little additional expenditure entered into by him with a view to her gratification; while had he married one in a higher position in life, such expenditure and attention would only have been held as matters of course.

Had, however, Jack known that the memorable breakfast was the first, and intended to be the last gift of his lady's godmother, and the taste displayed in its arrangement was that of one of Gunter's people, sent down on the occasion, he would not have held practice in such affairs as unnecessary as he did.

Nor is the apparent content we sometimes see in a cottage, at all times the content of the heart, but the stoicism of necessity; for where pride and towering am-

bition are attributes of that heart, it beats as high under a stomacher of stuff as beneath one sparkling with gems, and only waits the opportunity to gratify its predominant propensities.

The, of course, "happy pair" set off in about the usual style of persons in their condition in life, namely, a new travelling carriage, four greys, the boys in yellow silk jackets (presented to them for the occasion), with Jack's man, and a maid-servant, who attended the bride from childhood, in the dickey. Their destination during the honeymoon, Baden.

The first fortnight of this much-talked of honeymoon passed off, the bride all smiles and sweetness, the bridegroom all attention, devotion, and delight.

The first act of the lady towards taking up her privilege of self-action was brought before Jack by a most fashionably attired young woman, evidently a foreigner, entering the breakfast-room, and placing by the lady's side a most highly-perfumed pocket-handkerchief, and then with a bend that only foreigners can make, retiring at once.

"What delightful servants foreigners are!" said Mrs. Meredith; "how different, how superior to the English!"

"Pray, may I ask who this person is?" said Jack. "I have never seen her before."

"Oh! dear, no," replied the lady; "she only came yesterday, in time to dress me for dinner. She is a Swiss, who has just left the Comtesse Kariffman. I have engaged her as my personal maid, in lieu of old Susan, whom I shall send back; mamma can keep her, or not, as she pleases; though, as I make one less in the family, I conclude she will not be wanted at home."

"Do you think, my love," said Jack, "that it seems quite kind to dismiss one who has served you and your

family so many years, without making sure of a comfortable home for her somewhere?"

"Why, really," replied the lady, "while I was immured in Heathfield Cottage, I bore perfect *gaucherie*; but, of course, as a married woman, I must dress more than I did then, and Susan positively got more and more stupid every day; in fact, I could bear with it no longer."

However Jack's penetration might have been hoodwinked by the first ardour of his affection for a really beautiful girl, his sensitive feeling and proper appreciation of what was correct at once told him, in language not to be silenced, that there was a heartlessness in what his lady had said, that not only jarred on his feelings, but subverted every nerve of sensibility. The want of attachment to one who had carefully watched her childish footsteps, evinced a want of feeling quite at variance with his own disposition; and the term "immured," as applied to the home of her infancy and her parents, struck him as being as indelicate as improper. He felt the whole as a chill on his affection; he began to doubt where all before was confidence, nor could he conceal from himself that the fair being he now looked at was not the being that one short quarter of an hour past he had looked on so affectionately and so confidently.

Meredith, though born to love, and love enthusiastically, was the last man in the world to let blind infatuation hold mastery for any length of time over his good sense and judgment; he felt the event of the morning, trifling as to some men it might have appeared, had for ever obliterated one unit from the sum of his approbation of his lady's mind and heart. Any act arising from thoughtlessness or ordinary imprudence, however severe its consequences might be to himself, he would

forgive and forget; but a speech or act that betokened a feeling in the heart of her he loved, struck at once at the foundation on which he had placed his affection.

Probably Mrs. Meredith thought, like many of her sex, that the attention, affection, and admiration of her husband were as immutably her own as was the name the marriage ceremony entitled her to bear. No uncommon error this; but it is one by which the happiness of more married persons has been wrecked than, perhaps, by any other incidental to the female mind. To gain a heart sufficiently to gain also a husband is no difficult matter; but to retain the feelings and admiration of the lover requires circumspection in every act, and even expression of sentiment—that is, if the admiration of the husband is based on that which can be held as complimentary to woman.

Things, however, went on with the married pair for some months without any further material drawback on their happiness; in fact, so far as the lady was concerned, hers was as yet complete. The usual invitations were accepted, the usual returns given. Jack was quite aware that the first half-year had been a most expensive epoch; but he considered this as a usual circumstance to newly-married persons. It is true he had not found his unsophisticated lady quite as retiring as he thought she would have been, nor had the affectionate chiding he anticipated for promoting her amusement been inflicted: the truth was, there had been no occasion, on his part, for any steps likely to call it forth; for in point of promoting expenditure he found his lady take the most prominent part; and so far from shrinking from society, he found that, if her maiden life had been one of domestic retirement, a domestic evening was anything but what she held as desirable.

Jack was far too indulgent in disposition, and too liberal in pecuniary matters, to permit the expenses brought on by his young wife to interfere with the affection he entertained towards her; but the evidence forced on him, that his indulgence, his tenderness, and liberality, failed to render his society attractive to her, chilled every warm feeling of his heart. He felt that a girl lifted from a home of three hundred a-year to one of as many thousands, might be so fascinated with the pleasures around her, as to render their enjoyment too captivating to be resisted. But he found in his wife no counterpoise to this, no enjoyment of even the occasional domestic society of her husband. This at last struck a vital blow both to his happiness and affection. He said nothing to his lady or to mortal of his chagrin, but he noted it down as a most unwelcome monitor as to his future conduct. With him his affections chilled; "once to be in doubt," was "to be resolved," and once resolved he was one that well might say with Fitz-James, "This rock shall fly from its firm base as soon as I." To say that Jack's manner to his lady was precisely the same as it had been, would be anything but fact; it was considerate, kind, and gentlemanly; but that high-toned feeling, that renders man so sensibly alive to all those numberless attentions to the slightest wish of the woman he fondly loves and esteems, was past. He felt disappointed in his heart's best wish, and the mortifying thought burst on him that he had married a beautiful form without a heart.

Women possessing the delicacy of mind and feeling usual to their sex, are not easily deceived in affairs of the heart and its affections. The slightest diminution of affection in a beloved object is felt by them "keener than a serpent's tooth;" but Mrs. Meredith was not, in

her present frame of mind, sensible to this refinement of feeling. If any wish she had formed had been denied or counteracted, her anger might be aroused by the contradiction to that wish; but she wanted that keen sense of jealousy or appreciation of her husband's affection to arouse her fears of the refusal proceeding from any waning devotion on his part toward her.

In this frame of mind we find the couple at their breakfast-table in the commencement of the tale.

On that day, for the first time since his marriage, some business of importance rendered Jack's absence necessary for four days; on that of his return a dinner-party was to take place, to which his lady proposed a large party to be added for the evening. How far any arrangement was entered into between Mr. and Mrs. Meredith may be judged from what passed at the time, by which it clearly appears that a difference of opinion, at all events, existed between the husband and wife; but, to let the reader a little more into the family secrets, Jack for the first time put a decided veto on his lady's proposal. The consequence was a most perfect coolness in the lady towards her liege lord. This, some few months since, would have caused him feelings painful in the extreme; but now he had so schooled those feelings, that he only noted his lady's conduct in the tablet of Dr. and Cr., between man and wife, on the score of affection.

On the appointed day, Jack returned an hour before the time he expected his guests would arrive. Some few months since, impatience of the time he had been robbed of, in seeing his beloved one, would have made him seek her as his first desired object on his return; but now, partly curiosity, and partly the feelings of a husband who found his wishes had not only been disregarded but indelicately braved, caused him to seek an interview with his lady.

In reply to his message, Mademoiselle Justin informed Monsieur that Madame was dressing, but would be shortly in the drawing-room.

The state of things at Meredith Oaks (for so was Jack's property known) was this. On driving up the carriage sweep, the first thing that met his wondering gaze was a temporary awning, reaching from the hall-door to where a carriage must necessarily set down; and matting on the steps showed that satin shoes were expected to enter the portals. A glimpse at the court-yard showed a London confectioner's cart; and two confectioner's gentlemen bore ample testimony that the contents of the cart were of no plebeian order. A van with a canopy showed that some living beings of an order not to brave the elements had arrived in it; and, as it was not a *cortege* calculated to bring any one on visiting terms, Jack did not at once penetrate the mystery of the proceeding.

"What is that cart and van?" said Jack, as the servant came to the door, on Jack's driving up to it.

"The cart is Mister Gunter's, sir," said the man; "they came by the railroad to Rugby; and the van has brought the band from Leamington."

"Oh—aye," said he, neither wishing to appear surprised, or still less to permit his domestics to suppose their lady had done anything contrary to his wishes. The result, however, of what he saw was an immediate wish to ascertain to what these preparations tended, or at least to what extent; for that an assemblage of persons of no ordinary number was anticipated, was clearly evident.

Mrs. Meredith had shown considerable tact in avoiding an interview with her liege lord prior to the arrival of the guests; for she knew Jack to be far too well bred

to evince the slightest disapprobation of her conduct before them, and she also knew his generous and hospitable feelings would conduce to the same result. If she did apprehend any manifestation of his displeasure on the morrow, she felt the éclat of the neighbourhood would more than compensate for any little émeute that might result from it. She little knew the value of the heart she thus trifled with: far less did she know the inflexible and sturdy determination of its owner, in a rightful cause.

Jack, on finishing his toilet for the evening, strolled into the reception-rooms, to see the preparations made by his lady's orders. He entered an ante-room that on all ordinary occasions was used as a drawing-room. Certain minor embellishments to its usual appearance created little surprise, from seeing an unusual assemblage was expected. He walked to the door leading into the principal drawing-room: he found it locked. On demanding the key, he was told it was in the possession of his lady. Jack made no remark; but on the servants retiring, an energetic thrust of his foot burst it open, when, to his unfeigned astonishment, he found the really magnificent room enlarged by a temporarily-constructed apartment, fitted up as an eastern tent, to be entered from a large window that opened on the lawn. Two extra chandeliers had been put up, in addition to the one in the drawing-room, and one of gigantic dimensions destined to illumine the tent in an equal blaze of light. The library had been converted into a dinner-room for the day; and in the large dining-room he found tables being decorated and covers laid for at least a hundred; and, judging from the first *coup d'œil* of the uncompleted arrangements, they were intended to display, in common phrase, "every delicacy of the season."

From that moment, Jack made up his mind as to his future intentions; and a carriage coming round the sweep, he hastened to receive his guests. Mrs. Meredith entering at the same moment, Jack showed nothing in his conduct or manner that could tend to any conclusion but that they had passed the morning as usual. The dinner for twelve, Jack had ordered prior to leaving home: it was, consequently, in character with the habits and position in society of the donor; and his conduct and general demeanour were precisely what they would have been had the intended party been given with his entire approbation and consent. A peculiarity, however, in the manner of his lady did not escape his penetrating eye. There was a distracted air at times about her that plainly showed some apprehension as to the consequences of the bold step she had ventured on; and at others an over-officious attention to her guests, evidently entered into to avoid addressing her husband more frequently than absolutely necessary. All, however, passed off well. Jack never appeared in better spirits, nor did the honours of his table with more cordial and refined courtesy; so much so, that ere the ladies retired, Mrs. Meredith had recovered her usual confidence and serenity.

Jack, for many reasons, pressed his friends to sit over their wine longer than he usually did; and it was not till after he had heard the arrival of many equipages, that he assented to the proposal of joining the ladies. He found, as if done by magic, during dinner, vestibule and staircase lined with exotics. Coloured lamps hung where lamps had never hung before; and, on entering the ante-room door, that apartment, the drawing-room, and Grecian tent elicited a blaze of light that, it was evident, took his friends by surprise. The Grecian tent, with its rich silk lining and draperies, looked really magnificent;

and hurt and angry as Jack naturally felt, he could not but allow to himself that his wife, whose colour was a little heightened by excitement, was certainly the most beautiful woman in the room. An involuntary sigh escaped him, as the fear struck on his mind that so beautiful a casket did not contain the treasure of such a heart as he wished the chosen of his own to possess. He shook off, however, the corroding thought, and during the evening was the gayest of the gay, receiving the compliments paid to Mrs. Meredith's taste in her arrangements with well-acted signs of satisfaction and pleasure.

Mrs. Meredith now fancied her triumph complete; and her spirits rose as the idea strengthened that any displeasure on the part of her husband had given way in contemplation of the éclat of the entertainment. She little, however, knew the command that her husband had over any outward display of his feelings: still less dreamed she of the sweeping measures he could take when he found such necessary.

On retiring for the night, Jack made no allusion to the party. His lady, however, somewhat timidly remarked that she hoped he thought the little surprise she had planned for him had gone off well.

"Nothing could be better arranged," said Jack. He then dropped the subject, and also dropped, or pretended to have dropped asleep.

The next two days were occupied in restoring things to their usual state. Jack made no remarks, unless addressed, on the subject, and then made his replies without any manifestation of displeasure or reproach. The only alteration perceivable in his usual conduct was his being the greatest part of the day employed in writing, and his then starting for London, but without assigning any reason

for so doing, either on going or on his return, which occurred on the third day of his absence.

The next morning, at breakfast, Jack remarked to his lady, "You have never seen Ap Swilly, or Wales itself, I believe? I intend spending this spring there, instead of in London."

"What!" replied the lady, "bury yourself in such a place during the height of the London season!"

"If you call it being buried, residing in really a very beautiful locality during the finest part of the year, I certainly do mean our interment to take place," most imperturbably replied Jack.

"Interment, indeed!" exclaimed his lady. "You, of course, do not expect that I shall consent to go there?"

"From your tone, Mrs. Meredith, I shall certainly school my hopes, so as not to form so wild an expectation; but there we go."

"I suppose, Mr. Meredith, if I consent to go there for a few days, I can then go to town, and you can come up when you please to quit your Welsh Elysium for your town-house."

"Perhaps," said Jack, "you will not think your plan so feasible, when I tell you I have now no town-house."

"Good heavens!" cried the lady, "you surely have not let it."

"I have not," said Jack: "I have sold it."

"Sold it!" absolutely screeched the lady: "you can never find another I shall like half as well; and after the trouble that was taken in new-furnishing it on our marriage, and arranging that to so perfectly correspond with the house, it will never look to the same advantage in another."

"I was quite aware of that," coolly replied Jack; "so I sold it as it stood."

"Have we, then, no house to go to?" gasped Mrs. Meredith.

"Not in town, certainly," said Jack; "nor do I intend to have one again. Perhaps, under such circumstances, you may not feel so disinclined to visit Ap Swilly?"

"Oh, the horrid little hole!" cried Mrs. Meredith—"I could not exist a week there."

"You did, however," replied Jack, with some little asperity in his manner, "contrive to breathe in Heathfield Cottage, and, I trust, will do so at Ap Swilly: at all events, you will make the attempt."

"Will, sir?"

"Yes—will," said Jack.

"As, Mr. Meredith," said his lady, "without in any shape consulting my wishes, you sold my town-house, I shall take the liberty of consulting my own now, by remaining here."

"I think not," said Jack.

"And why, pray, may I ask?"

"Simply," replied Jack, "because this house is let for a term of seven years, just as it stands."

"Heavens, Mr. Meredith!" cried the lady, "what do I hear! Has anything happened? Have you lost your fortune or your wits?"

"Neither," replied Jack; "but had we gone on as we have done the last year, I certainly should in time have lost the one, and then, possibly, the other. To prevent either catastrophe taking place, we go to Ap Swilly."

"And pray, may I ask," said Mrs. Meredith, "where can you put the establishment in your Welsh mouse-trap?"

"Perhaps," said Jack, smiling, "you may also consider it a lady-trap. But I will dispel your uneasiness regarding the establishment, by informing you that I shall take no

more with me than the mouse-trap can accommodate, which will be three maid-servants, two men, and a lad."

A shriek and paroxysm of rage and tears combined followed this information, when Jack, rising leisurely, said, "I fear you may bring on hysterics by your present excitement;" and, ringing the bell, he desired Mrs. Meredith's maid to be sent up, and then left the room.

All the arrangement of departure Jack took upon himself; and, on again seeing his lady, informed her that they should commence their journey on the fourth day from the one on which he had communicated his intentions.

"You mentioned," said Mrs. Meredith, "three female servants as being the number you intended to retain. I conclude, then, you have engaged some Welsh ones; and, of course, Bennett, Justine, and Leroux, are those you intend taking with you."

"I must have stated my intentions enigmatically, I conclude," said Jack; "for I meant to be understood that three would comprise the number we should want. Justine is by far too fine a lady for a place where her talents would be uncalled for; and a French cook would not be required to cook mere mutton, fish, and game. Bennett I should advise you to take, as I know she will not object to add the duties of lady's-maid to those of housekeeper."

"Justine I cannot, will not part with," said Mrs. Meredith. "I cannot dispense with her services."

"You will, at all events, make the attempt," coolly replied Jack; "and permit me to recommend your personally dismissing her, to avoid yourself the mortification of my doing so. My reasons for insisting on this are such, that nothing can alter my fixed determination."

Baffled and really alarmed by the cool but determined

manner of her husband, Mrs. Meredith found her only resource was submission; for she could bring no charge of unkindness against him, had she called in the mediation of friends.

Jack was perfectly correct in his suspicions of the intrigues of the insidious foreigner, Justine. In her last situation, she had served a woman of rank, who ruled a weak-minded husband with despotic sway. She had, by imperceptible degrees, instilled into the mind of Mrs. Meredith the idea that she had only to exert her prerogative of wife, to bend her husband to her wishes in all matters where that prerogative could be supposed to exist, which, in Mademoiselle Justine's calculation, embraced the management not only of a husband, but of all his affairs and expenditure. She it was who put the memorable party in her mistress's head; the Grecian tent was her suggestion; and, having been accustomed to witness such display, her taste and talent were, to do her justice, in such cases first-rate. The results, however, of her consultations with her present mistress, as it is seen, were not exactly the same as they had been in the family of the old Count; and finding, to her cost, that such was the case, "brute" and "monstre" were the softest terms in which she mentioned her master, while "idiot," "fou," and "pauvre imbecile" were those she covertly applied to her lady. Jack, however, took especial care that the wily and indignant soubrette was safely on her journey the day before that of his quitting the house.

On the appointed morning, the travelling-carriage, with its imperials, trunks, and boxes, swung round to the door.

Something almost amounting to a sigh escaped Meredith, from the recollection of the first day that carriages,

similarly packed, received its mistress and himself. The dingy red jackets and half-slovenly dress of the postboys did not look to advantage, when contrasted in mind with the gay silken ones and critically neat attire of those who drove him on the well-remembered occasion. He was not one, however, to let "shadows" strike terror to his soul.

Mrs. Meredith entered the carriage with a kind of dogged serenity. "Well," soliloquised Jack, "that is better, and far less troublesome than hysterics, at all events." Bennett and Jack's man mounted the dickey; and the carriage drove through the lodge-gates of Meredith Hall. Mrs. Meredith would not pay her husband the compliment of appearing to give a parting look at his paternal home—a home where, she could not conceal from her own conscience, she might have been supremely happy. She could not, however, avoid giving a furtive glance at its castellated front, ere it was lost to her sight, if not for ever, for at least an indefinite number of years. The thought intruded that, probably, if ever she entered its portals, it would be when the heyday of her youth was gone. She flung herself back in the carriage, and silently shed a flood of tears. Stolen as had been her glance, it had not escaped her husband's observation; and he hailed the unobtrusive burst of feeling as indicative that, if the feelings, mind, and heart of his wife had been perverted, that heart was still alive to sensibility.

There is a certain perversion in the human heart that often, very generally, causes the offending party to be the last to conciliate. This frequently arises from the fact that, in most cases, the aggressor is the least amiable of the two parties, and is further cursed by a sort of stubborn pride that refuses to bend to the avowal of error. Whether such was the feeling of Mrs. Meredith,

or whether she hoped that by a show of constant ill-humour and discontent she might induce her husband to give way in his resolves, is not my province as a mere narrator of a tale to decide on. If the latter idea was the incentive to her conduct, no woman ever more misunderstood the disposition she had to deal with. Jack had found that no mild representations of the ruinous effects of his wife's determination on indulgence in lavish expense had any effect in changing her conduct, and that no affectionate regard to his very sensible wishes acted as the slightest counterpoise to her own inclinations. He saw, therefore, there was but one step to take, which was to force her from her field of action. To have merely circumscribed its limits, would only have led to daily discussion and invective. He determined, therefore, to strike to the root of the infatuation that had sprung up in her mind since her marriage; or, if he found it was of earlier growth, and only waited for opportunity to shoot forth, he made up his mind to crush the very germ from which it sprung. An avowal of error on the part of his lady would have done away with any feelings of anger or discontent he might entertain towards her at once; and a promise (if founded on conviction of its propriety) to alter her conduct would have induced him to return her to the world, and indulge her in every reasonable wish his fortune could supply; but, till some such manifestation was made, he would no more abate one iota of his resolve at the end of twenty years, than he would at the expiration of as many days. This proceeded from no feeling of obstinacy on his part; but, in all he did, he acted on principles. What he knew to be right, nothing could turn him from; and what he felt was wrong, no power could make him do; and if those about him would not thus act from the same laudable motive, he

was quite one to force them to do so from some other cause.

At the end of the second day, they arrived at Ap Swilly. One glance, as the carriage approached, showed Mrs. Meredith it was not quite the "mousetrap" she had so derisively designated it. Small and unpretending it was, in comparison with Meredith Hall. Still, it looked the abode of a gentleman of moderate income, and very far beyond her native home. To any one not determined to be displeased, it offered many attractions. It stood on a summit, at the end of a most beautiful valley, showing all the variety of wood and water. At a distance of three miles was seen the ocean, on which a succession of vessels floated, entering and leaving a small but picturesque seaport town. On the carriage drawing up, a most respectable middle-aged woman and a cheerful-looking young female appeared, to offer their services, and a silent, respectful, but smiling welcome, to their new mistress. Mrs. Meredith swept by them; and, desiring to be shown her sleeping apartment, at once went upstairs. Her maid, Bennett, instantly followed.

"I hope, ma'am, you do not find yourself indisposed," said Bennett.

"Only, I believe, every bone in my body dislocated by the horrid roads," replied the lady, with bitterness, throwing herself into a large old-fashioned arm-chair. "Even this," cried the lady, pettishly shifting her position, "is more an instrument of torture than one of ease; but is, I suppose, a specimen of Welsh luxury."

By his master's desire, his man now tapped at his lady's door, and informed her woman that dinner would be on the table in half-an-hour; on which information he was desired to inform his master that Mrs. Meredith was

so fatigued, she would wish a tray to be sent to her room.

Neither Jack's quietude nor appetite was disturbed by his lady's arrangement. He discussed some trout, done to a turn, en papillottes, part of a leg of Welsh mutton, and a portion of cranberry tart, with perfect relish and nonchalance; nor was the wine, of some years' storage in the cellar of Ap Swilly, neglected, though partaken of by its owner solus.

To Ap Swilly, though in itself a place of small extent, were attached the privileges of lord of the manor. For this reason, it had been purchased by Jack's grandsire, and put in the substantial repair of those days. Jack and his father had generally spent some few weeks in it during the best of the shooting and fishing season; so he was perfectly well known to all the surrounding families, but to none so intimately as to Mr.—or, as he was always styled, Dr. Pearson, rector of the parish.

The worthy rector did not suffer the next day to pass without calling on Jack, to welcome him to Wales, and express the pleasure he and his family anticipated from an introduction to Mrs. Meredith.

Jack had seen quite enough of his lady's present disposition to anticipate the probability of her declining intimacy with any of his Welsh friends; and, having a most deserved respect for the Doctor and his amiable family, to avoid any contretemps or misconceptions taking place, candidly put him *au fait* of the motives that occasioned Mrs. Meredith's being brought to take up a permanent residence in Wales.

"This must not be allowed to go on, my dear Meredith," said the Doctor. "We must endeavour to wean your lady from any determination on seclusion; and we must, by degrees, convince her of the hallucination she

labours under, in fancying happiness is only to be found in crowded and expensive assemblies. I trust you will not think me arrogant in saying that I conceive no woman better calculated to effect this than Mrs. Pearson; and believe me, my dear friend, that in such a cause she will not be easily deterred from becoming a frequent visitor to Mrs. Meredith, if she has your sanction to make the attempt."

To so kind a speech but one reply could be made by any sensible and well-bred man; and Mr. Meredith's assurance of his proper appreciation of the value of Mrs. Pearson's acquaintance for his wife was perfectly sincere.

Mrs. Pearson was nobly allied, most highly educated, and, till the age of twenty-two, had moved in the highest circle of society. She had, as it may be supposed, from her position in life, her talents, and an engaging and a beautiful person, had more than one offer of marriage. Her heart had, however, remained untouched; and though her fortune was small, indeed, for a girl thus connected, she was not one to sacrifice her feelings for pecuniary considerations. She married Dr., then Mr., Pearson.

On her first introduction to Mr. Pearson, he was a curate, "passing rich" with seventy pounds a-year. To this, however, was added a small patrimony of two hundred pounds. With this moderate stipend, much as he admired Miss Cecil, it was not till after many months of intimacy that "on that hint he spake." The result was, that the family interest was put in force, and the living of Ap Swilly obtained for the curate; so that, being worth three hundred a-year, his own two, and Miss Cecil's fortune adding three more, the young couple, happy in each other, found eight hundred per annum quite equal

to their domestic views and wishes. Dr. Pearson was quite right, therefore, in his conviction that no person could be better calculated to reform the young bride's habits and ideas than his wife; and their only daughter, being about Mrs. Meredith's age, was still more likely by example, and equally so by precept, to effect the same transformation.

The next morning Mrs. Pearson called, and with perfectly good tact, merely left her card, without any attempt to see Mrs. Meredith. During the next three or four days, all the families to whom Jack was known called; and though "not at home" was the ordered reply to all, Jack made no observation; but he told Mrs. Meredith that he both wished and expected the visits returned.

"I thought," said Mrs. Meredith, with much asperity, "it was to avoid company we came here."

"Certainly," said Jack, "it was to avoid company to the extent we kept it, but by no means to shun all society."

"I suppose, however," said the lady, "I may be permitted to visit or not, as I feel disposed."

"Whether you may choose to visit my friends or not," said Jack, "is a matter of perfect indifference to me; but I should recommend you to pay them the common courtesy of returning their calls, if it be only done by dropping your card at their door, unless you prefer my accounting for your not doing so in a way that will be by no means flattering to you."

"And pray," asked the lady, "am I to make this detestable round in a Welsh car?"

"Such an observation," said Jack, "is as ridiculous as it is uncalled-for. I believe you are aware your pony-phaeton, your riding-horse, and a servant to attend you,

are here; and, for the close carriage, on the present or any occasion on which you want it, posthorses may at all times be had in two hours."

Mrs. Meredith had begun to understand her husband's habits too well to refuse his reasonable proposition. To have had it told that she was brought down, like a froward child, in consequence of her former conduct, was an idea too mortifying to be borne; and she was quite aware that Jack would not hesitate at doing this, rather than have it supposed that he meant disrespect towards persons and families he esteemed.

The visits were accordingly made, at least as far as leaving cards went; and even for this, the kindness of his manners to his lady on her return showed her the advantage of acting with proper consideration for her own and her husband's credit. Mrs. Meredith was not proof against this; and the evening passed off more cheerfully than any since their arrival in Wales. The truth was, though, perhaps, unthought of, she was in better humour with herself. She had made a progressive step in the right way; and that silent monitor, her conscience, whispered what she would not have at the time allowed even to herself.

The morning after this, Mrs. Pearson called on Mrs. Meredith, and, not waiting for any observation of the servant's, walked in, and learning that his mistress was in the house, did not wait to ascertain whether she was "at home" or not, but at once walked into the drawing-room, where Mrs. Meredith was sitting.

The latter lady, somewhat taken by surprise, did not attempt to conceal the emotion, but inclined somewhat stiffly.

Mrs. Pearson had seen too much of the world and society to be taken, in sea-phrase, "abaft." She knew

her motives were in a right cause; and, walking up to Mrs. Meredith, and extending her hand, she said, "I am aware I intrude, and perceive you think so; but, my dear Mrs. Meredith, we have known your good husband from a boy. We regard him with the warmest feelings of esteem, and are quite prepared to love and esteem all those dear to him; therefore, bon gré mal gré, you must permit me to consider myself an old friend of yours, and one who will endeavour to make your sejour amongst us rude Welsh as agreeable as the limited means of ourselves and acquaintance will admit."

Human nature could not but be softened by such an address. Mrs. Meredith took the proffered hand, saying, "I must, I find, Mrs. Pearson, make you an exception to my resolve on seclusion."

"And why, my dear young friend," replied her visitor, "should one so young, so formed for society, and, permit me to add, so attractive, form any so stern resolve? Doubtless you have found the world, as I found it, a heterogeneous mixture of vanity, pride, and apathetic feeling. You have become blasé sous l'effet, and have wisely resolved to make fashion your slave, instead of, as many do, being the slave of fashion; but I trust we shall show you there are some hearts in humankind alive to better feelings; and I also trust your self-banishment from the fashionable world for a temporary period will hereafter be recalled with many pleasurable reminiscences. I must now take my leave, but, in doing so, allow me to presume on the kind exemption you have made in my favour. I have a daughter about your own age—a good girl, and one I am vain enough to think you would like. May I include her in your list of the admissibles?"

"Most willingly," replied Mrs. Meredith, with one of

those smiles that won her husband's heart in the unpretending circle of Heathfield Cottage.

Mrs. Pearson lost no time in furthering her amiable determination of bringing about, if possible, a perfect reconciliation and right understanding between her own and her husband's friend, and his young bride. She introduced her daughter; and, to Jack's unfeigned astonishment and gratification, he found that, on Miss Pearson's calling a few weeks afterwards, she had been invited to stay dinner.

Mrs. Pearson had shown herself a most distinguished diplomatist in all she did, on Jack's behalf, relative to Mrs. Meredith. Her leaving it to be supposed by that lady that her coming to Wales was held by Mrs. Pearson and her family as voluntary was a master-stroke of policy. It put all parties at their ease, and did away with any jealousy that might have arisen in the young bride's mind of a preconcerted plan between her husband and his well-meaning and estimable friends.

Jack was too good a politician to make any remark on his wife's growing partiality towards Mrs. and Miss Pearson. He was quite aware that his wife's primary reasons for refusing to visit his Welsh friends were, first, from a desire to annoy him, and, secondly, from the idea that, by keeping them aloof, she should render the place as intolerably dull to him as she considered it must be to her. He was far too astute not to penetrate her reasons, and too good a tactician not to be able to render them futile, and turn the tables on herself. To this end, he gave two or three men's dinners in succession, at which he neither expected nor invited his lady to appear. Two days after the last, was the one on which Miss Pearson had dined with them.

A considerable change had by degrees taken place in

Mrs. Meredith's manners, temper, and conduct since her introduction to the rector's family. The pony-carriage, that for some weeks had stood unused and unnoticed, was now in almost daily requisition; and Jack was most agreeably surprised by his lady's remarking, one morning, at breakfast, that she feared she should become too nervous, from want of habit, to mount her horse again. This was said with a certain air of timidity, and without venturing a look at her husband. It was not lost on him, and he good-naturedly replied,

"I dare say, Matilda, your horse will make allowance for your want of practice, and will go unusually quietly."

"You think, then, I may trust myself, with William as my guide?" inquired the lady.

"Most certainly, unless you will allow me the honour," replied Jack, smiling, and bowing low, "of being your faithful attendant-knight."

Mrs. Meredith merely extended her hand, and, on Jack's pressing it, hurried out of the room.

A tear that had started to his wife's eye, on presenting her hand, produced the pressure that her husband gave, as a silent but certain assurance of commencing forgiveness. His newly-returning tenderness, on Mrs. Meredith's reaching the privacy of her own room, caused a flood of repentant tears. These, followed by a self-constituted review of her past conduct, awoke her to a sense of the danger she had run of losing the affections of one both constituted for, and wishing to unite the tenderness of the husband and the guardian hand of the fond friend with the attention and devotion of the lover.

On meeting her husband again, it was with the same smile that had first made his heart all her own. It was not, perhaps, as bright as that; but there was a subdued

sweetness in it that was more tender. Neither spoke, yet each seemed fully to understand what were the emotions of either heart. She looked in her husband's face, and, advancing to him, said, in a faltering tone,

"Am I forgiven?"

Jack caught her in his arms, and pressed her to his heart. That pressure precluded the necessity of words; and, in each succeeding year, the anniversary of the day of their reconciliation was hailed by both as even more dear than the one that first joined their hands.

As a faithful historian, I must gratify my reader's curiosity or interest—if I have awakened either—as regards Mr. and Mrs. Meredith's after-movements. They did not quit Ap Swilly till a two-years' residence there fully made up the sum expended in the first year of their marriage. Mrs. Meredith had made herself so agreeable amid the friendly and unpretending society of the neighbouring families, that, on their quitting Ap Swilly, the assurance that its owners would spend three months in each year there was hailed with sincere pleasure by all.

Mr. Meredith's position in life rendered it both desirable and proper that he should make his paternal property, Meredith Hall, their usual residence. This, it need scarcely be told, though, as Jack truly said, it had been let for a term of years, was only so let at the option of the owner, redeemable at a trifling sacrifice. The town-house was not repurchased; and, at Mrs. Meredith's request, no other was sought for. A furnished one was hired for the two months they annually spent in London; and, when the time drew near to revisit Ap Swilly, Mrs. Meredith was the most impatient of the two to see friends that had rendered themselves so dear to her. At the head of these stood the worthy rector's family.

"To-morrow," said Mrs. Meredith playfully, "we shall see those dear friends, and the spot that restored me to my husband's heart, and rendered me the happy, happy wife I now am."

In narrating this portion of Mr. and Mrs. Meredith's life, I have merely used the plain and simple language required for such a purpose. Glowing and descriptive expression I leave to the novelist, quite satisfied if the words I have used may "point a moral," though not "adorn a tale."

THE END.

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ERRATUM.

In page 107, *for* drive *read* dare.

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